



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Charles Danger, P.E., Director  
Building Department

**FROM:** Corinne Brody, Director  
Office of Performance Improvement

**DATE:** January 31, 2001

**SUBJECT:** Building Department 4x10 Study

I am pleased to submit the attached final report in response to your request for a study of the feasibility of extending Building Department plans review and inspection service hours by converting appropriate staff to four, 10-hour-workday schedules. Our study focused on assessing whether a business case exists for extending service hours, whether sufficient staff are available to change to a modified work week and whether there would be any operational impediments to the transition. During the course of our review we also examined if it was necessary for collateral agencies in the permitting process to align their operations to a revised Building Department schedule.

As previously discussed with you and your staff and reported to the Efficiency and Competition Commission at their January 26, 2000 meeting, we are not recommending changes to your existing schedule for plans processing and inspections at this time. However we do recommend that the system impediments and operational considerations that we identified be addressed during your Department's relocation. After the move, a more complete review of customer preferences can be conducted and the pilot programs outlined in Appendix C can be considered.

It was a pleasure working with you, BEST team members and other departmental staff to complete our review. Please feel free to contact me at 349-6123 if you have any follow-up questions.

CB:da

Attachments

c: George Burgess, Executive Assistant to County Manager  
Pedro G. Hernandez, Senior Assistant to County Manager

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY  
OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT**

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**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY  
BUILDING DEPARTMENT  
Feasibility of Four Day, 10-Hours Per Day (4x10)  
Workweeks**

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**January 2001**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of suggestions from the Building Efficient Services Together (BEST) program, the Building Department (the Department) began investigating the feasibility of adopting 4x10 workweeks. A 4x10 schedule requires staff to work four days each week for 10 hours each day with three days off. The Department requested the Office Of Performance Improvement (OPI) to review the proposal to determine the impact and feasibility of instituting compressed workweeks. The main objectives of the study were to verify that there is a valid business case for adopting alternate working hours, gauge staff acceptance of changes in the workweek, and present alternatives to the proposed 4x10 schedule. The review was limited to permitting services, customer information, plans review and inspection services. Additionally, OPI reviewed the impact on operations within associated departments that team with the Building Department in support of the permitting functions.

In addition to working with BEST program participants and reviewing work processes, OPI completed surveys of the Department's customers and staff, researched the application and success of alternate service hours in building departments nationally and in other Miami-Dade County departments, and identified a range of issues to be considered in determining the effectiveness of 4x10 schedules. OPI also developed and discussed scenarios for possible work schedules with Employee Relations Department staff and briefly discussed the concepts of 4x10 schedules with union officials.

### Employee Survey

The staff survey included 262 employees from the Building Department, the Department of Planning and Zoning (Zoning), Environmental Resources Management (DERM), and Water and Sewer (WASD). Forty-two of the 262 employees were administration and support staff not initially considered for alternate work schedules. Of the remaining 220 employees, 172 (78%) expressed interest in working a 4x10 schedule and only 37 (18%) were willing to consider working on Saturdays. Several employees preferred to maintain their current work schedules. Employees interested in the 4x10 schedule indicated they would use the additional weekday to conduct personal business without using sick or annual leave. Others cited a desire to spend more time with their families, to attend classes or to avoid traffic delays. Some employees who were not interested in working a 4x10 schedule also cited the same reasons for disinterest. Others noted loss in effectiveness, lower productivity and employee burnout for their disinterest.

Employees were also given the opportunity to comment on their interest in a 5-day, 8-hour (5x8) staggered schedule. There was little interest in working this schedule and most employees cited family and personal commitments and arriving home too late as reasons. However, many of these employees are very interested in working a 4x10 schedule that would still require them to work late. This indicates that staff may have preferred the 4x10 schedule largely because of a desire to have an extra day off.

### Customer Survey

The customer survey sought to gauge the public's willingness to make use of extended service hours if the Department elected to offer services after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends. The Department mailed questionnaires to all customers on its active list, however OPI received no responses. Surveys were also distributed through the Department's offices and by inspectors during field visits. OPI received and analyzed 36 responses from this effort. However, the Building Department has more than 20,000 active customers on record. Therefore, conclusions drawn from the 36 responses cannot be assumed to be representative of customer preferences. Of the 36 respondents, 29 (81%) would use the

extended weekday hours for plans review and/or inspections. However, only 13 (36%) would make regular use of weekday extended hours for plans processing services and 19 (53%) indicated they would for inspections. Only 10 (28%) would use Saturdays for plans review while 15 (45%) would regularly use Saturdays for inspections. Customers indicated they would not make use of Saturday afternoon service.

#### Survey of Other Jurisdictions

OPI compared building departments' service hours in 16 jurisdictions (seven Florida counties and nine jurisdictions nationwide) to determine their hours of operation and work schedules. Only three jurisdictions, San Diego County, Duval County and Los Angeles County, offer extended services and only for permit applications. None offer extended service hours for inspection services. Extended service hours were offered are as follows:

- a. Los Angeles County extended service hours as part of an initiative to reduce peak hour traffic, reduce air pollution and save energy. The main offices provide plans review services only in support of projects in County-owned facilities and operate from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and are closed Fridays. Other County-operated field offices offer no extended service hours.
- b. San Diego County offers extended service hours on Thursdays only. The main office offers full intake counter service as well as access to plans reviewers. No inspection services are offered. Extended hours are facilitated through staggered 8-hour shifts and began as a pilot project. The County reports that despite low demand, it will continue to offer the services.
- c. Duval County began offering extended service hours four years ago for homeowners to drop-off and pick-up building plans. Extended hours are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 7:00 p.m. with intake staff and cashiers working staggered 5x8 shifts. Duval County reports that while homeowners were initially targeted, professional plan runners are the primary users of the extended service hours.

#### Feasibility of 4x10 Schedules

While the limited customer survey suggests the extended hours will increase customer convenience, the major benefit accrues to employees who will benefit from an extra day off each week. 4x10 schedules will be effective if the following conditions exist separately or combined:

- a. The County adopts a policy to offer building services to the public only four days per week
- b. Departments increase staffing and 4x10 crews scatter their extra day off to ensure processing time and delays are minimized
- c. Both the County and industry invest in new technology to facilitate online plans submission and simultaneous plans reviews and approval by each trade to increase productivity and process efficiency

The study found no overriding business case to justify instituting 4x10 work schedules across the entire Department, nor evidence that extending business hours five days per week with existing staff will increase productivity, reduce costs or increase customer service. The County exercises no control over public demand for and the timing of services therefore the Department must be staffed to respond to

requests as needed. Consequently, any initiative that reduces staff on any workday may adversely affect customer service. Additionally, any initiative to extend business hours and/or compress the work week will require a review of all mainframe and distributed computer programs, significant reprogramming of mainframe applications and new investment in security for after hours transactions.

Flextime and compressed workweeks are being contemplated by a number of businesses nationally as employers seek solutions to traffic congestion, long commute times and occupancy costs. These alternate work schedules are initially attractive because they may increase productivity as both the employer and employees can focus resources to match service demands. Alternate work schedules can also be helpful as demand shifts or work volume decreases.

Alternative schedules however, raise several issues that employers must resolve. When developing alternate work schedule policies, employers need to establish clear goals for instituting alternate workweeks. These may include increased productivity, customer services, morale and/or cost reduction. The effects of current labor agreements, applicable labor and overtime laws, the Family Medical Leave Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act must be evaluated. Additionally, prior to instituting any alternate work schedule, employers must determine if business will be conducted four, five, six or seven days per week based on customer needs. Once this is established, employers should determine, employee eligibility to participate, level of participation, if participation is voluntary and whether to use rotating schedules.

Policies developed for alternate work schedules should be well coordinated with other policies and directives; ensure there is no discrimination and address employees' ability to work part time or reduced hours under the new schedule. Procedures should also establish how the work schedule will be maintained during training and re-certification to minimize work disruption. Generally, the following should be assessed:

- a. Determine the work activities or services to be extended past the normal close of business and customer demand for and/or willingness to use the services
- b. Review and modify safety and security procedures to protect data, customers and employees during extended business hours
- c. Establish new business policies concerning job scheduling, workdays, work assignment, overtime and carryover and the need to work on scheduled days off
- d. Upgrade technology as required

OPI identified the following issues specific to the Building Department:

- a. Except for a slightly lower demand on Mondays, customer demand is evenly distributed throughout the week and is highest between mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Any initiative that significantly reduces staff during these times will increase carryover and affect the Department's ability to meet established turnaround times. This is especially important as the industry demands quicker response and shorter permitting processing times.

- b. Job-basis employees who currently work between 40 and 48 hours per week would effectively work 40 hours per week under a 10-hour per day regime. This represents as much as a 20% reduction in productive hours. Additionally, the Department meets current production totals partly through overtime. 4x10 schedules would reduce the opportunities for overtime outside of an employee's scheduled days off. These issues are amplified when staff takes vacation, sick or educational leave.
- c. Aside from reduced overtime opportunity, on a 4x10 regime staff will be available up to 26 fewer hours per year because they are entitled to additional days off or holiday pay when a holiday fall on their scheduled day off.
- d. Construction sites are normally closed after 3:30 p.m. weekdays and all day on weekends. Extending inspection hours requires access to construction sites later than 3:30 p.m. and cooperation from the industry (at its own expense) to make sites accessible.
- e. If the Building Department allows public access during the extended hours, supporting departments should do so as well to make the full array of permitting services available to the public. Some departments (including Building) would need to hire additional staff and purchase additional equipment to be able to work a 4x10 schedule.
- f. Any initiative to compress workweeks (or to extend business hours) requires significant changes in service schedules, shift management and supervision, scheduling of inspections, and back office technical support systems to match the new operating hours.

### Recommendations

Compressed workweeks are not feasible at the Downtown offices. The main issues are the inability to process the volume of permit applications without increasing backlog, staffing limitations and inadequate supervisory staff support. The Department must also consider the effect of reduced staff on the level of services provided on Professional Day. Additionally, if the Department offers public access after 5:00 p.m., new security measures and elevator lockout programs would be required to control public access to other floors. Elevator reprogramming would cost in excess of \$40,000 and there will also be a \$145/hour service charge payable to General Services Administration (GSA) for use of the offices after 5:00 pm and on weekends. Compressed workweeks are not feasible for plans examiners at the West Dade offices largely due to staffing limitations and back office support requirements.

While OPI does not recommend 4x10 schedules for inspections at this time, inspectors and permit clerks at the West Dade offices could more easily staff a 4x10 schedule. Staff would need to scatter their days off throughout the week to reduce the impact on customer service. Staff may also need to report for work on their days off to complete carryover inspections. The main issues inhibiting implementation of a 4x10 schedule include access to construction sites after 3:30 p.m., available daylight hours during fall and winter months, limitations of mainframe computer programs, limited staff available for crew supervision and the anticipated level of carryover when staff is reduced.

OPI recommends the Department not implement 4x10 workweeks at this time because of the need to improve the infrastructure and work processes to accommodate 4x10 workweeks. Departments must first resolve all the business issues identified (technical support, software modifications, public access,

security and staffing) before instituting any alternate work schedule. We recommend the departments fill existing staff vacancies but we do not recommend increasing staff solely to facilitate 4x10 schedules. OPI also recognizes that the move to new West Dade facilities is planned for 2001 to bring all building services under one roof and to utilize improved technology. Given the number of issues that need to be resolved before working alternate schedules, we recommend the Department resolve these issues in conjunction with the move. Once departments are relocated and the effectiveness of the new offices has been evaluated, we recommend reassessing the feasibility of 4x10 workweeks.

Alternate work schedules are not recommended for division chiefs, unit supervisors and senior managers. Additionally, neither the South Dade nor Airport office is recommended for participation in alternate work schedules.

As an alternative to 4x10 schedules, the Department may increase customer convenience by offering extended hours for permitting services to the general public on weekdays and four hours of inspection services on Saturdays. Inspection services should initially to be targeted to homeowners. OPI suggests two six-month pilot programs as follows:

- a. For permitting services, form staggered 5x8 crews offering extended service only two days each week for two extra hours each day. Staff on the late shift should be no more than 20% of the current staff complement and will provide plans drop-off and pickup, information and cashiering services. Plans examiners at SPCC may participate only if the public requires this service.
- b. In the case of inspections, create a crew consisting of no more than 20% of the current staff in each trade to provide Saturday services. On a rotating schedule the Saturday crew works four 9-hour days each week and four hours on Saturday.

These pilot programs provide flexibility and where extended services are under utilized, the Department may revert to the traditional 5-day schedules. As with a 4x10 schedule, extensive preparation will be needed to resolve many of the same business issues prior to implementation. OPI recommends incorporating plans for these pilot programs into the planned move to the new West Dade facilities. Issues include:

- Review computer systems and reprogram software as required.
- Reschedule technical support staff to provide adequate on-site coverage.
- Review access, security and work procedures.
- Consider employee response to the proposed changes. Inspectors and permit support staff may have to begin work at 6:00 a.m. in order to end the workday at 3:30 p.m. This may be unattractive to staff. Alternatively, staff could end the workday at 4:30 p.m., but only if the Department can effectively schedule work from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- Secure union approval as required for making changes to the workweek.
- Scatter days off for inspection staff to reduce the impact of staff shortages.
- Develop a cost effective method of informing the public of the procedural changes.

## **2. BACKGROUND**



The Building Department strives to be proactive in addressing service demands through reengineering, and upgrading data and communications systems to increase productivity. OPI began this project at the request of the Building Department Director based on the following assumptions:

- The Building Department may improve customer service by extending service hours.
- A majority of staff is willing to adapt to a 4x10 workweek. The suggestion for a 4x10 workweek emanated from the Department's Employee Participation Program; Building Efficient Services Together (BEST).

For the purposes of the study, a 4x10 workweek refers to a schedule in which staff work four 10-hour days with three days off each week. On a 5x8 schedule, staff works five days per week with two days off.

The Building Department provides plans processing, building permits and inspection services, and enforces regulations governing buildings and unsafe structures. The Department is divided into four technical/trade divisions (Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Building). Trade division directors are responsible for executing both plans review and building inspection functions for the trade. Figure 1 shows a simplified organizational chart for the Department. Two divisions, Information and Permit Support and Administration, provide internal support to the trade functions. Information and Permit Support is dedicated to supporting plans intake, routing, tracking, and customer service while Administration provides operational and administrative support for the Department.

Building services are provided from four principal locations. The main offices located in the downtown Government Center provide the majority of the plans intake, plans review and administrative functions. An office located at the Mall of the Americas (West Dade) provides plans review services for construction projects less than 1,000 square feet, administrative support and building inspection services. One satellite office located at Miami-Dade International Airport is dedicated to plans review and inspection services for airport customers only. The fourth office, located in South Dade Government Center provides only permit application and plans intake services. Plans received at the South Dade offices are normally sent to the downtown offices for processing.

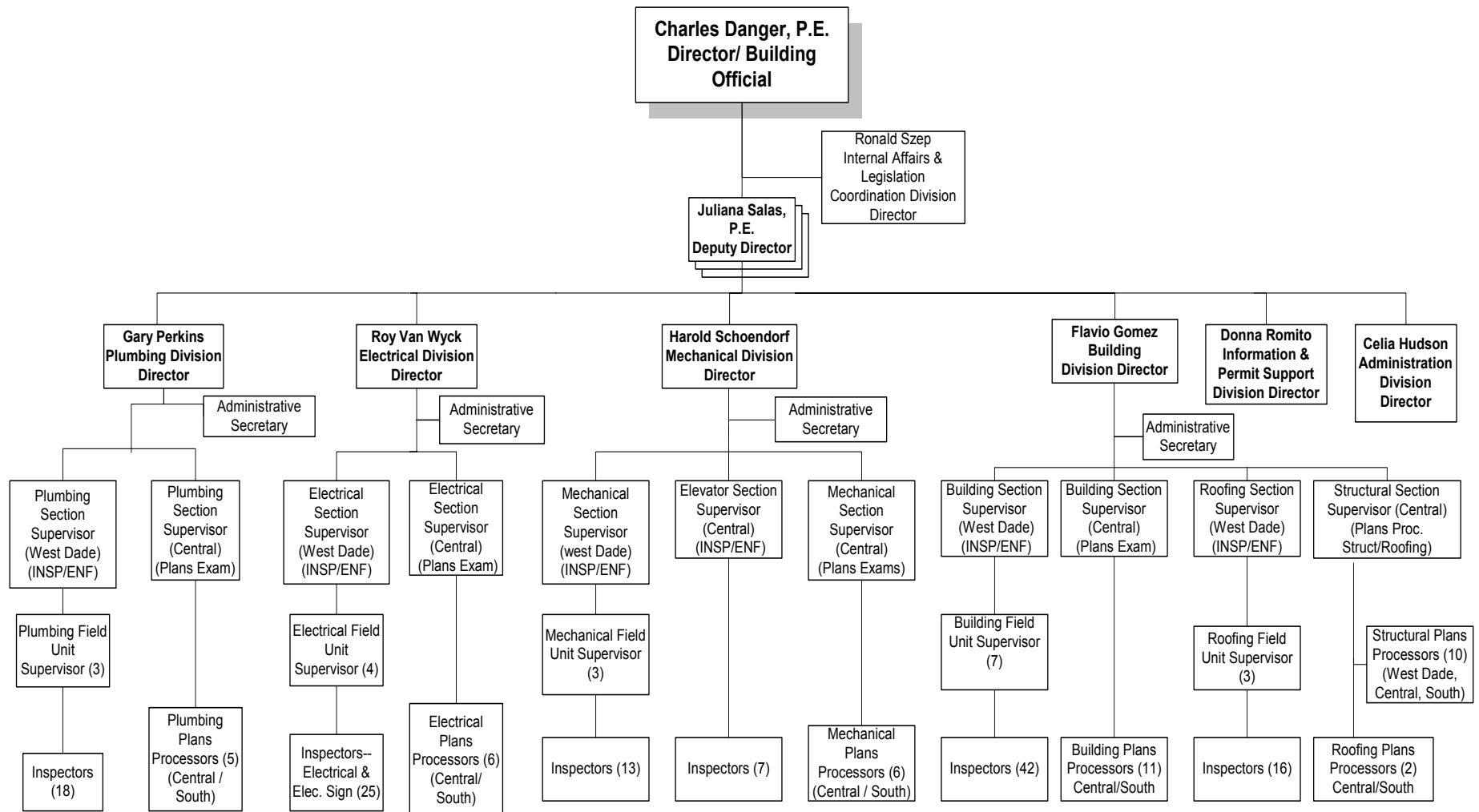
The growing economy is fueling increased construction activities within the County, which has increased demand for improved service and reduced time for reviewing and issuing building permits. The Department has made several service improvements in recent years through acquisition of new technology, and is committed to improving services through automation. The Board of County Commissioners passed Ordinance # 99-140 requiring the Department to complete initial building plans reviews within 30 days for residential construction and 50 days for commercial projects. Failure to meet these timeframes will require the Department to reimburse the builder for each day's delay.

The Department, however, continues to experience difficulties in part due to staff shortages and lack of new technology. Since October 1998, the Department has experienced personnel turnover of 35% in the face of increasing demand for building services. As of May 2000, The Department had seven of 41 (16.5%) plans examiner positions and 17 of 136 (12.5%) building inspector positions vacant.

The County requires builders to secure building permits before commencing construction, and to subsequently pass County inspections at predefined stages of construction. Figures 2 and 3 summarize

the permit application and construction inspection processes.

Figure 1  
Building Department - Organization Chart



**Figure 2**  
**Miami-Dade County Building Department**  
**Permit Application and Plans Review Work Flow**  
**Summary**

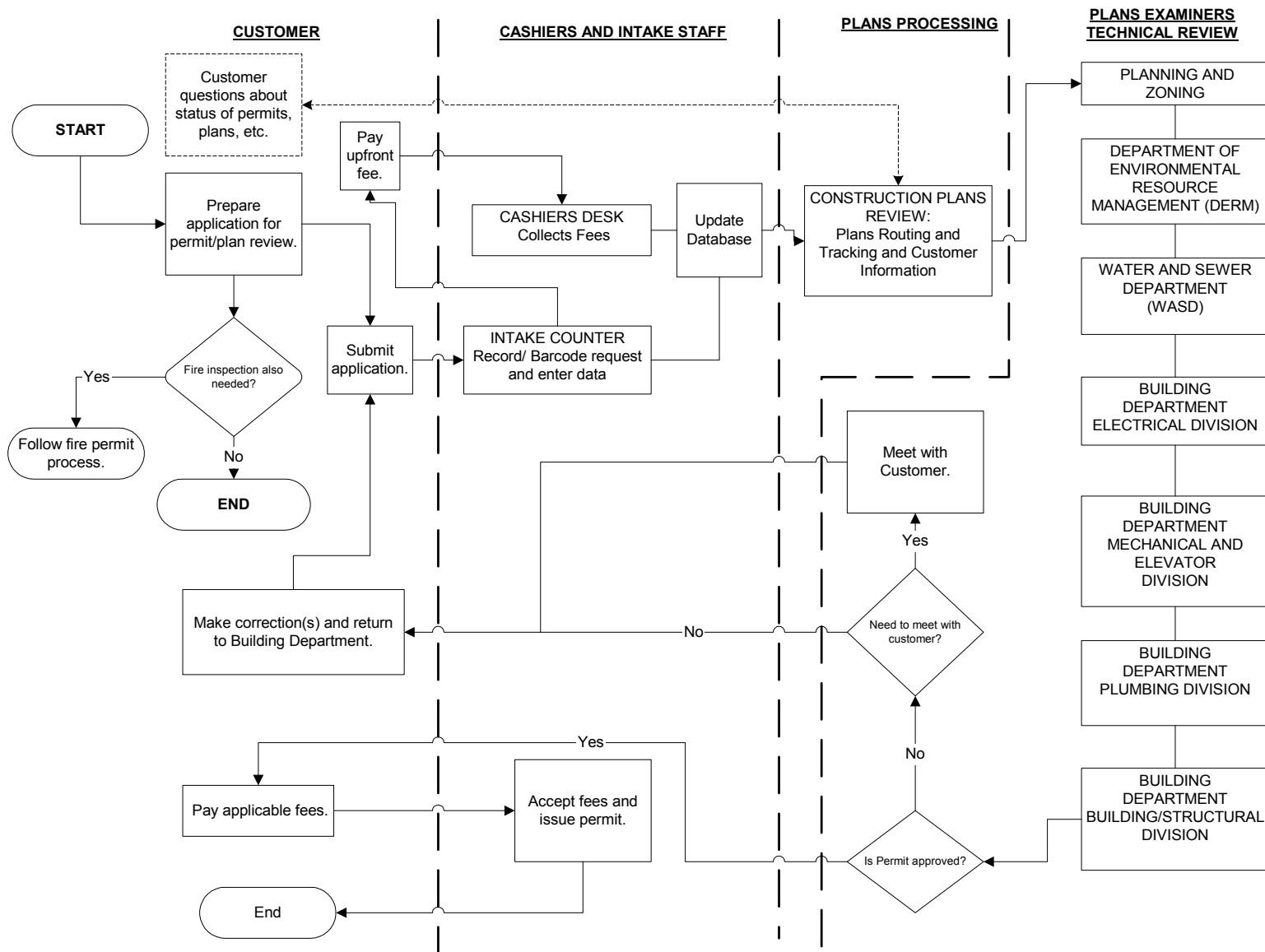
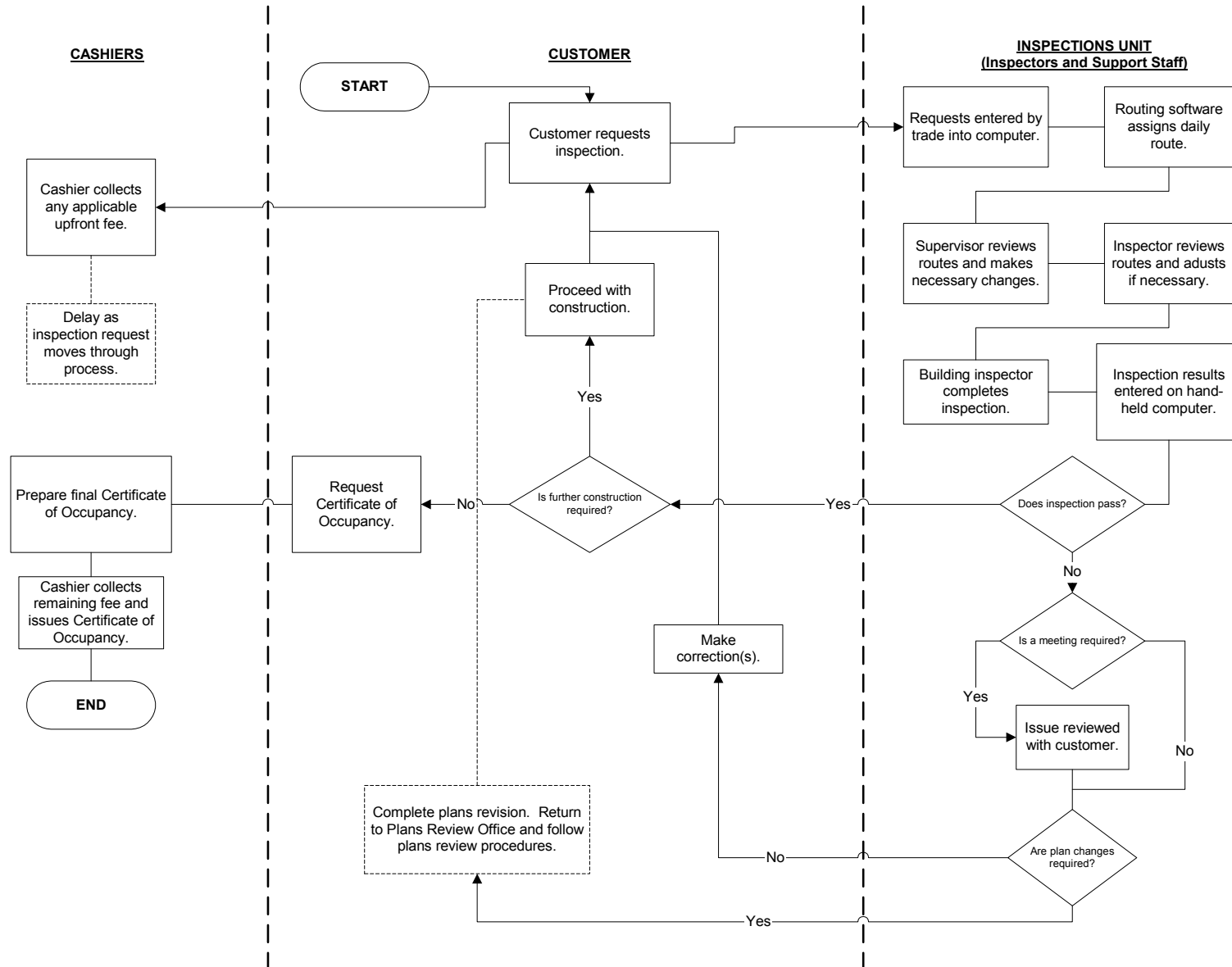


Figure 3  
Miami-Dade County Building Department  
Inspection Work Flow Summary



The Department has no capability for electronic plans submission. Therefore builders apply for building permits in person (Figure 2). Applicants submit the required number and type of building plans along with the completed application form and pay a portion of the permit fees. Permit support staff barcode applications and plans, then enter the data into the tracking database. Plans processing technicians physically distribute the plans to examiners in the various trades based on permit type and required routing. Technicians maintain a log (using the barcode system) of the date and time plans are logged in and out of each division. Each trade examines the building plans, approves or rejects the application and deposits the plans in “pods” to be retrieved by plans technicians for distribution to the remaining trades. If construction plans require Fire Department review, the builder completes and submits a separate application to the Fire Department along with a fire review fee. WASD also collects a separate fee and DERM collects a separate fee for those projects outside the unincorporated municipal service area. Once all the required trades have approved the plans, the Department issues a building permit for construction.

Plans submitted in support of permit applications may be drop-offs, walkthroughs or revisions. Walkthroughs are simpler permit applications that the Building Department attempts to process in one workday. Drop-offs refer to more complex plans that require several days to process. Revisions occur when permits are rejected, in which case the builder revises the documents and resubmits the application. Applicants may telephone or visit the Building Department for information concerning the status of their application.

Monday is designated as “Professional Day” for plans examiners. Industry professionals (engineers and architects) may meet with plans examiners to discuss design, building code requirements and other permitting issues. It should be noted that on Professional Days the Department processes a reduced number of plans. Residential customers may meet with plans examiners any day of the week.

During the construction phase, the contractor is required to pass predefined progress inspections as shown in Figure 3. When an inspection is due, the builder may request the inspection using the automated voice response system, by telephoning requests to a building clerk, applying in person, or via the Internet. The Department’s computerized scheduling program schedules inspections, creates driving routes and assigns inspectors by trade and geographic zones. Inspectors visit the construction sites, complete inspections, file inspection reports and update the database using wireless hand-held devices. When construction is completed and the facility has passed all the required inspections, the Building Department issues a certificate of completion and/or a certificate of occupancy as required.

### **3. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

The Building Department requested OPI to review the feasibility of 4x10 workweeks. The review was limited to building services that directly impact customer service, and includes permit application, customer information, plans review and inspection services. Additionally, OPI analyzed the impact of changing work schedules in other departments that provide building services. These departments include WASD, DERM, Planning and Zoning, Fire and the Florida Department of Health. The main objectives of the study were to:

- a. Verify that there is a valid business case for adopting alternate working hours
- b. Gauge staff acceptance of proposed changes in the workweek

- c. Determine if the proposed 4x10 schedule is feasible
- d. Present alternatives to the proposed 4x10 schedule

#### **4. REVIEW METHODOLOGY**

OPI reviewed operations in Department work units to establish their role in providing building services and to determine how changes in work schedules would impact operations and service levels. Additionally, OPI reviewed the operations of associated departments that team with the Building Department to support the permitting functions. OPI interviewed Department staff, collected information from internal and external sources and worked with the BEST program team. The following steps were completed in evaluating the proposed changes in work schedules:

- a. Conducted surveys of building department customers and staff, and staff of Planning and Zoning, DERM, WASD and the State of Florida Department of Health
- b. Participated in the BEST 4x10 working group meetings to further understand operations and address business issues
- c. Researched the application and success of alternate service hours in building departments nationally
- d. Researched the application of alternate work schedules in other Miami-Dade County departments including Solid Waste Management, WASD and the Employee Relations Department
- e. Identified a range of issues surrounding extending business hours, including the impact on overtime, building security, technical support, staff requirements and customer service. Discussed these issues with members of the Builders Association of South Florida
- f. Evaluated production volumes, work loads and overtime expenditures
- g. Discussed the proposal with Miami-Dade County's Employee Relations Department
- h. Discussed collective bargaining implications with representatives from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees local union (AFSCME) and the Government Supervisors Association of Florida (GSAF)
- i. Evaluated scenarios for alternate work schedules and developed recommendations

The remainder of the report is divided into three sections. Section 5 presents the findings and the results of the surveys, Section 6 details possible shift options and Section 7 summarizes conclusions and recommendations.

#### **5. FINDINGS**

The findings are categorized into five main areas related to the Department's workload, overtime, business and operational issues, survey results and options for alternate work schedules.

##### **A. Building Services Work Load**

During FY-99, the Department issued 98,108 building permits (Figure 4), completed 195,981 plans reviews and conducted 430,938 building inspections. Workload increased dramatically during the first six months of FY-00 compared to the same period in FY-99 largely due to increased building activities across the County. During the first six months of FY-00, the Department issued 49,132 permits, an

increase of 3,208 (7%) over the same period in 1999 when 45,924 building permits were granted. A similar comparison of plans review workload indicates the number of plans reviewed increased 42%, from 93,554 during the first half of FY-99 to 132,600 for the same period in FY-00. This 39,046 increase in plans examined has created increased demand for the Building Department to complete timely plans reviews while setting aside adequate time for staff to meet with customers and industry professionals. During the first six months of FY-00 the number of inspections increased by 16,585 (7.9%) to 224,400 compared with the same period in FY-99.

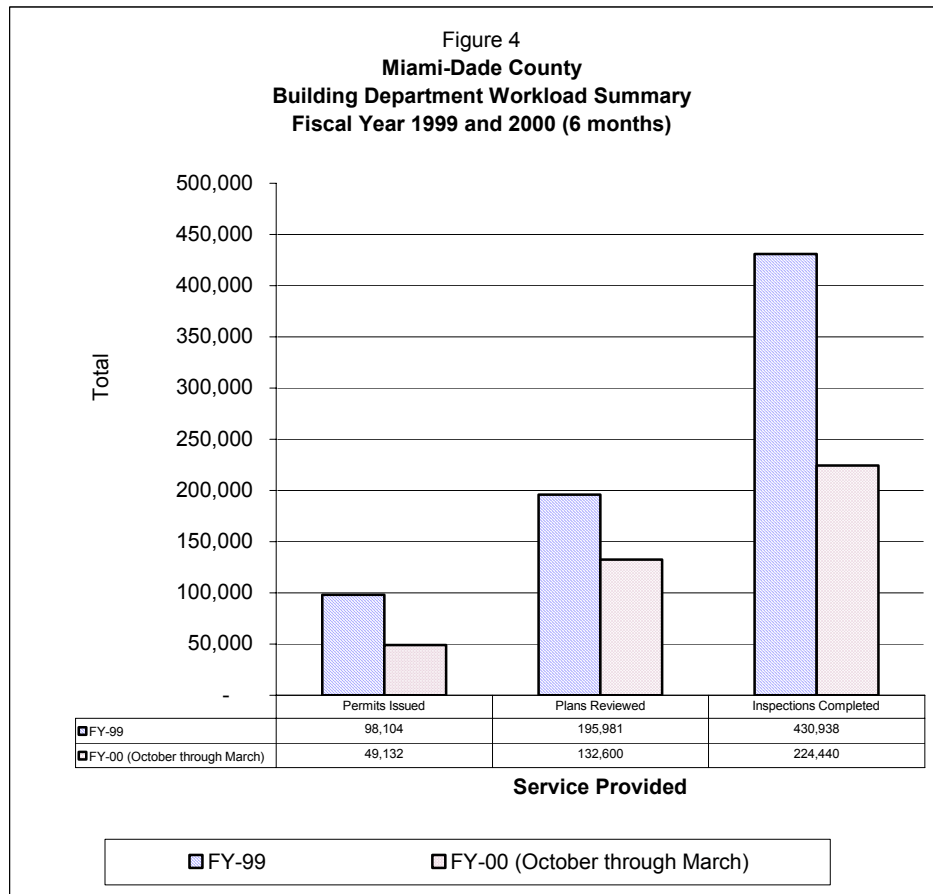


Table 1 below shows the average monthly work distributions across divisions during 1999. The Electrical Division issued 32% of all permits each month, Building accounted for 30% and Plumbing, Mechanical and Roofing construction accounted for 15%, 12% and 11% respectively. The Building/Structural Division conducts the majority of plans reviews (23%) followed by the Department of Planning and Zoning (17%). The Building Division also conducts the majority of construction inspections (40%).

In 1999, an average of 16,332 plans were received each month of which 8,002 were walkthroughs (49%), 2,286 (14%) were drop-offs, and 6,043 (37%) were revisions. During the first six months of FY-00, of the 22,100 plans received per month, 8,177 (37%) were walkthroughs, 6,188 (28%) were drop-offs and 7,735 (35%) were revisions. Typically, each trade is allowed two working days to complete initial plans reviews in order to meet the requirements of County Ordinance #99-140.



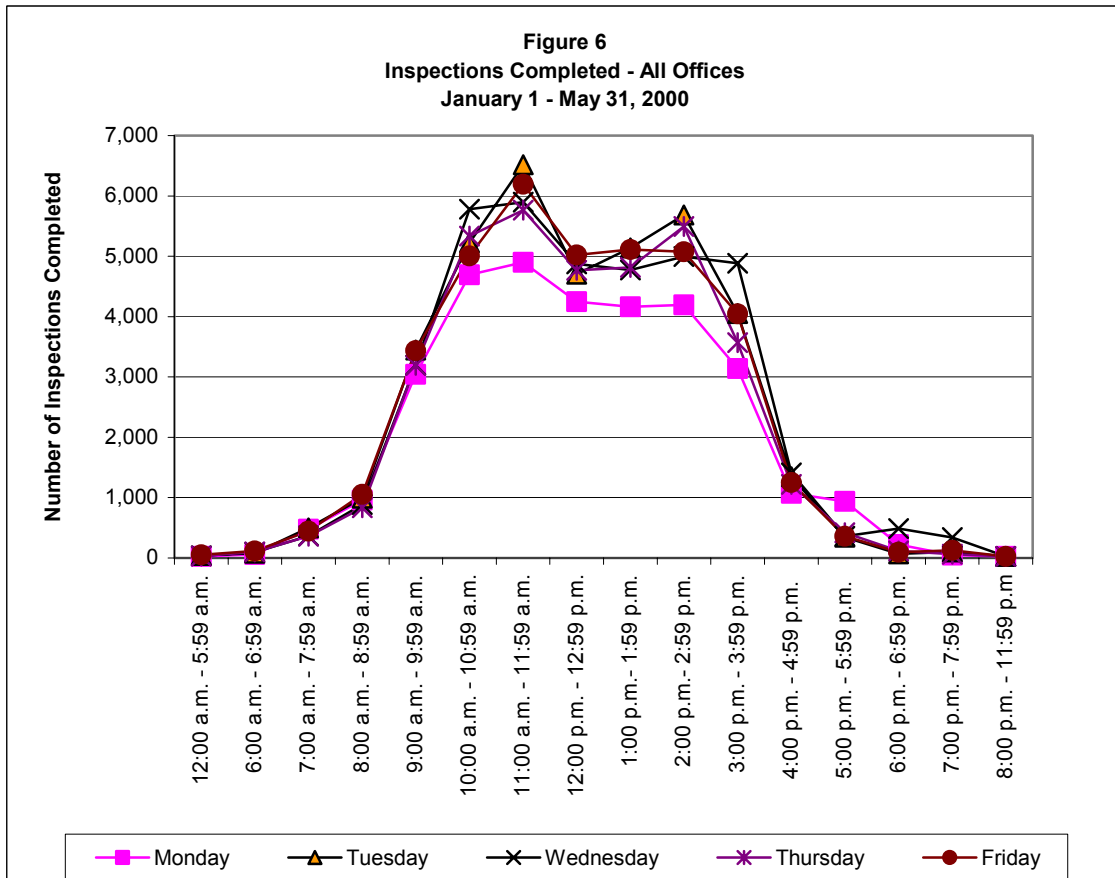
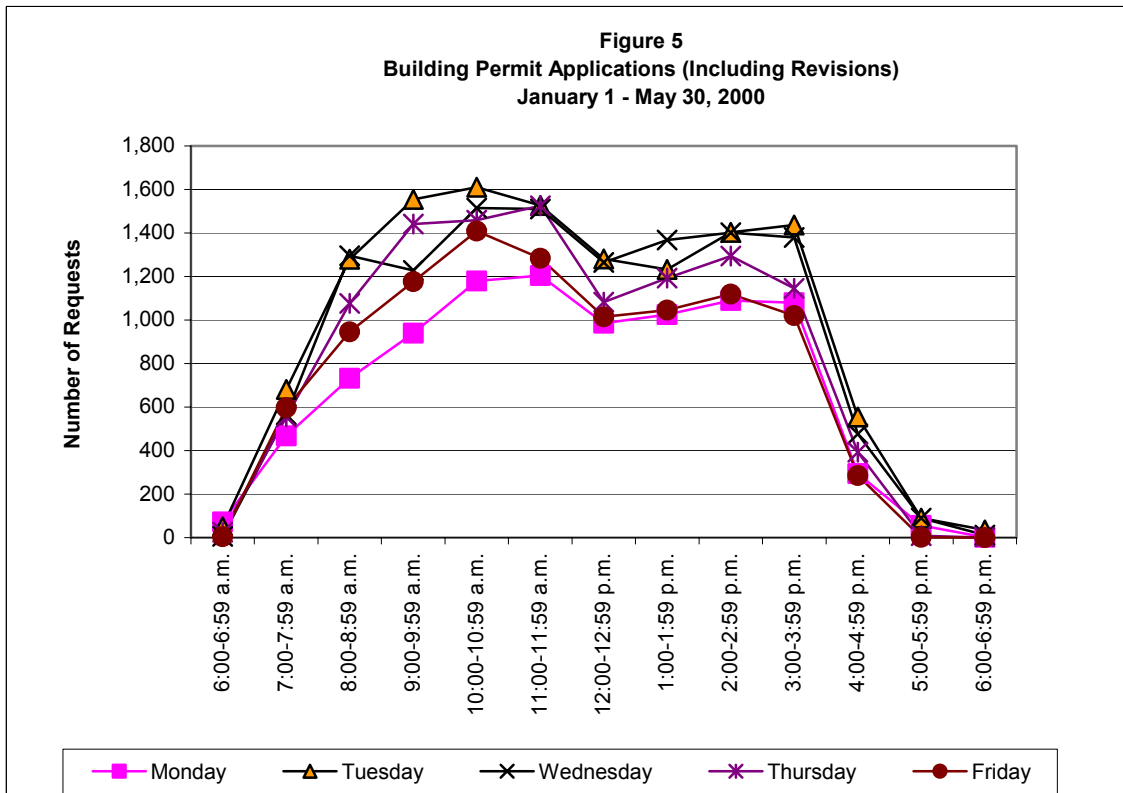
Table 1  
**Miami-Dade County  
 Building Department**  
**Summary of Monthly Production by Trade**

<b><u>FY - 99</u></b>							
<b>Trade</b>	<b>Permits Issued</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Plans Reviewed</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Inspections</b>	<b>%</b>	
Building <sup>1</sup>	2,454	30%	3,773	23%	14,266	40%	
Roofing	903	11%	Included with Building	n/a	4,282	12%	
Electrical <sup>2</sup>	2,584	32%	2,079	13%	7,652	21%	
Mechanical <sup>3</sup>	985	12%	1,860	11%	4,289	12%	
Plumbing <sup>4</sup>	1,250	15%	1,879	12%	5,423	15%	
Structural	Included with Building		2,018	12%	Included with Building		
Planning and Zoning	n/a	n/a	2,796	17%	n/a	n/a	
Handicap & Shop Drawings <sup>5</sup>	n/a	n/a	1,927	12%	n/a	n/a	
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>8,175</u></b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>	<b><u>16,332</u></b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>	<b><u>35,912</u></b>	<b><u>100%</u></b>	

**Notes**

1. Building plans review totals include Roofing plans reviews
  2. Electrical inspections include signs
  3. Mechanical inspections also include Boiler and Elevator inspections
  4. Plumbing inspections include gas installations (LPGX)
  5. Shop drawings are schematics supplied with equipment and appliances such as air conditioners that may be submitted by the builder for department review
- n/a – not applicable

Figures 5 and 6 show the workload distribution by day of the week and time-of-day for permits and building inspections. Workload does not vary significantly from day to day but is generally lighter on Mondays. The majority of permit applications are received between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. and after 2:00 p.m., while peak times for completing inspections occur between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. and after 2:00 p.m. each day.



## B. Overtime Expenditure and Revenues

Annual paid overtime (based on the fifteen month period of October 1998 through December 1999) was \$423,687 for 14,769 hours. As shown in Table 2, inspectors worked 8,887 hours (60%) of the recorded overtime while plans processing technicians worked 1,710 hours or (8%). The remaining 4,712 hours (32%) are attributed to clerical support in various areas of the Department. During the period, individual overtime payments ranged from a low of \$4.20 to over \$22,900.

Building inspectors (including roofing) accounted for 4,198 (47%) of the 8,887 overtime hours paid to inspectors. The Mechanical Division (including elevator inspections) accounted for 2,347 hours (26%), Plumbing Division, 1464 (17%) hours and Electrical, 878 (10 %) hours. Division directors and the Employee Relations Department estimate that plans examiners work 45 to 48 hours per week. However, plans examiners are job basis employees and their overtime is not recorded.

Division/Trade	Inspectors		Plans Processing		Building Clerks		Administration and Other Overtime		Total	
	Hours	Cost (\$)	Hours	Cost (\$)	Hours	Cost (\$)	Hours	Cost (\$)	Hours	Cost (\$)
Building-Building	3,709	131,059	82	2,942			3	88	3,794	134,089
Roofing	489	18,081	7	285					496	18,366
Mech. Elevator	1,602	48,520							1,602	48,520
Mechanical	745	27,373	30	1,203			2	51	778	28,627
Electrical	878	32,458	29	1,053			1	18	908	33,529
Plumbing	1,464	51,448	48	1,665			24	653	1,537	53,765
Information and Permit Support			973	14,710	2,194	39,585	365	6,267	3,532	60,562
Administration					1,168	23,417	955	22,811	2,123	46,229
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,887</b>	<b>308,939</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>21,858</b>	<b>3,362</b>	<b>63,002</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>29,889</b>	<b>14,769</b>	<b>423,687</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Builders periodically request inspections outside of normal business hours. Whenever this occurs, the builder reimburses the Building Department for four hours work at \$45 per hour (\$180) per inspection. Customer-requested overtime was estimated to total 326 requests in 1999, which accounts for less than 1% of all inspections conducted outside normal business hours. This represents total reimbursement of \$58,680 to the County (Table 3).

Table 3  
**Customer-Requested Overtime for Building Inspections**  
**(October 1998 through December 1999, annualized)**

<b>Trade/Unit</b>	<b>Number of Requests</b>	<b>Revenue (\$180 per inspection)</b>
Building (includes Roofing)	126	22,680
Mechanical (excludes elevators)	74	13,320
Elevator	12	2,160
Electrical	60	10,800
Plumbing	54	9,720
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>\$58,680</b>
Number of requests for weekend inspections (excluding Building Division)	32*	\$5,760

**Note:** \* Includes all trades except Building. The Division provided no dates for overtime inspections.

### **C. Business and Operational Issues**

OPI reviewed various business issues and operational issues and their impact. These include customer service, planning and administration, technical support, productivity and the effects on other departments. OPI also investigated how alternate work schedules may impact staff availability and work volumes. A comprehensive list of issues is provided in Appendix A. In making the decision to institute compressed workweeks, the following business issues should be considered.

#### **Customer Service**

A customer may be classified as residential or commercial. Commercial builders and professional plans runners (expeditors) may also file permit applications for residential construction. The Building Department expects that improved customer convenience will be a major benefit of extending business hours. However, in offering the services, the Department should seek assurance that the industry will allow access to construction sites for inspections after normal site hours. The current practice is to cease construction by 3:30 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends unless there is an overriding reason to remain open. Additionally, for plans drop-off and pick-up, the Department should only make the services available if the public is willing to use the services after 5:00 p.m. Customers may make little use of extended service hours if builders and homeowners have to incur additional expenses (overtime and transportation costs) in order to use the services or if access is difficult.

Compressed workweeks will reduce the staff available on certain days and may result in increased customer waiting and production backlog. These delays will increase customer aggravation and the perception that the Building Department is inefficient. Additionally, the SPCC offices are not equipped to allow controlled public access after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends. If the public is allowed access after normal business hours, the Department will need to make costly arrangements to improve security and restrict public access to other floors after normal business hours. In lieu of offering public access, staff may use “quiet time” for back office functions and to clear backlog.

Compressed workweeks will also reduce the opportunities for overtime and, combined with reduced

staffing on some days of the week, will increase processing delays. As an example, during a typical compressed workweek, a division will operate with reduced staff on Monday and Friday. A builder who makes a request for inspections on Thursday afternoon may not have the inspection completed on Friday because of the reduced staff. However, on the following Monday, staff is again reduced creating the possibility that inspections may be further delayed. The Department may consider multiple work schedules, multiple crews and/or scattering days off during the week to minimize the effects.

#### Planning and Administration

4x10 schedules are attractive to staff because they offer three days off each week. Consequently any inconsistent application of alternate work schedules across divisions may adversely impact employee morale. Multiple work schedules also create issues concerning how time-off is taken. When working the 4x10 schedule, a day off is counted as 10 hours and as eight hours while working the 5x8 schedule. Compressed workweeks increase personnel and production costs as an employee could work as many as 26 hours less each year as employees are entitled to an additional day off when a holiday falls on their scheduled day off.

Departments should develop shift management strategies for tracking attendance, assigning work, scheduling inspections, and ensuring that adequate supervision is provided during each shift. Also, adequate staff must be available at all times (refer to Figures 5 and 6) to manage the daily workload, peak-hour service demands and to minimize backlog/carryover.

Access to staff is a common problem encountered with compressed work schedules. Typically, staff works a different schedule than the general public, other businesses and other departments. Consequently, on occasions when key staff is needed to solve problems or to provide information, the employee may be off duty. To minimize this problem, departments may institute the “buddy system” in addition to precluding some staff from working a compressed schedule. The buddy system requires an employee to be paired with another on a different schedule. All information and decision-making authority from the first employee is passed to the “buddy” whenever the employee is off duty. Additionally, it will be difficult to schedule meetings and other business activities to include all staff at once.

Supporting departments (WASD, DERM, Public Works, Planning and Zoning, and the Fire Department) may need to offer the same service hours as the Building Department to ensure the full range of customer services are available. Analysis of staffing indicates that DERM could not offer extended service hours without increasing staff. In DERM, some work is assigned to specialists, and in many cases the “team” consists of a single individual. Other departments indicated that increased staffing is required before any compressed workweek can be effective. Without added staff, departments will have to request staff to work on their days off to meet service requirements and clear backlog. The situation is further complicated when staff take vacation, sick or educational leave.

Plans examiners with the Planning and Zoning Department at both the West Dade and SPCC locations require access to files stored on non-building floors at SPCC. These include plats from the 11<sup>th</sup> floor file room, agreements and resolutions on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor, and roads and right-of-ways on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor. Access to these files is a priority, and must be taken into account when reviewing access control and elevator lockouts.

Union approval is required before implementing any compressed schedule, introducing Saturday service,

or any other schedule that changes the number of hours per day or days worked each week. The collective bargaining agreement requires departments to notify the unions in advance of obtaining employees' consent.

Extending building inspection hours may reduce overtime reimbursement from customer overtime requests and will also reduce staff overtime (in excess of the 10-hour day), provided staff is not requested to work on their days off. However, OPI expects the Department will continue to receive a small number of overtime requests from builders requiring inspections outside the normal business hours.

#### Technical Support

Extending business hours past 5:00 p.m. or providing Saturday services requires additional on-site technical support, modifications of computer programs and changes in public access to the SPCC building. The mainframe computer program that creates daily inspection routes must be modified to accept weekend work and work entered after 4:00 p.m. on weekdays. The program currently executes at 5:30 p.m. and the established deadline for data entry cut-off is 4:00 p.m. The cut-off time for carryover specifications would also require modifications since inspectors will be able to enter results later than 4:30 p.m. Additionally, the entire mainframe computer system requires analysis to determine the best method of assigning inspectors (by name and trade) to manage the various zones and/or portions of zones during the workday and to recognize shift changes. The existing software assumes inspectors work regular weekdays in predefined zones and while supervisors can manually reassign routes, the software cannot handle large volume reassignments without modifying the program.

The Information Technology Department (ITD) provided no cost estimate for completing the above modifications. However, ITD will conduct extensive analyses and provide price quotes once the Building Department determines business policies (including defining business days, cut-off times for carryovers and establishing weekend quotas). Additionally, within the Building Department, in-house computer systems and support services that will be affected include plans tracking, regulation, code enforcement, elevator and boiler tracking, and 40-year building re-certification. It should be noted that there is no on-call staff to support these in-house services after 5:00 p.m.

The General Services Administration Department (GSA) estimates it will cost approximately \$40,000 to reprogram two elevators at SPCC as part of the effort to control public access to other floors after 5:00 p.m. weekdays and on weekends. This excludes costs to key stairwell doors, erect security barriers, and modify fire safety procedures and to provide Building Department access to the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> floors. GSA also charges \$145 per hour for after-hours use of the offices. The Department will incur \$121,800 in space charges per year for 2½ hours each weekday and five hours on Saturdays.

#### Productivity

A compressed workweek is not expected to increase productivity. Despite the attractiveness of three days off each week, a 4x10 schedule increases the probability of end-of-day fatigue. This may result in reduced productivity and/or increased absenteeism. In plans review, any reduction in productivity impacts negatively on the Department's ability to meet turnaround times imposed by ordinance. In the case of inspections, this will increase the number of inspection carryovers.

Current production levels are achieved partly through overtime. During compressed workweeks, the only overtime opportunities are employees' days off or work in excess of 10-hour days. Also, job basis employees currently work as many as 45 to 48 hours per week without overtime compensation.

Instituting 4x10 workweeks effectively reduces the workweek to 40 hours (a loss of 12.5% to 20% in productive hours). While job basis employees may be asked to report on their days off, it would be counter-productive to do so frequently.

During compressed workweeks, divisions will operate with 30% to 50% less staff at least two days each week. This increases when staff takes vacation, sick or educational leave. Consequently, in order to reduce backlog and provide an adequate level of customer service, the Department may have to increase staff, request employees to work 12-hour days or on their days off, to meet customer demands.

The Department may also experience reduced productivity during the extended inspection hours due to rush hour traffic delays, increased travel times when inspectors work across zones, and reduced daylight hours during fall and winter.

#### Effect On Other Departments

Other departments supporting the permit and inspection processes face most of the same issues as the Building Department. Plans examiners in the Fire Department work 4x10 schedules, but provide no public access after 4:30 p.m. or weekend services. Extending service hours will have the least effect on the Fire Department as the Department is already filling staff vacancies. DERM and the State of Florida Department of Health indicate they would need additional staff and equipment to operate a compressed schedule. WASD and DERM also expressed concerns about the cost and effectiveness of a compressed workweek.

### **D. Survey Results**

OPI completed a limited survey of the Building Department's customers and surveyed staff in the Building Department and other departments involved with permitting and inspection processes. Additionally, OPI surveyed building departments in 16 jurisdictions nationally. Details of the survey results are presented in Appendix B.

#### Customer Survey

The customer survey sought to gauge the public's willingness to use extended service hours if the Building Department elected to offer services after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends. In an effort to broaden the survey, the Department mailed questionnaires to all customers on its active list. However, OPI received no responses as a result of the mailings. Surveys were also distributed through the building offices and by inspectors during field visits of which 36 customers returned completed questionnaires. The Building Department has more than 20,000 active customers on record, therefore, conclusions drawn from the 36 responses cannot be assumed to be representative of customer preferences.

Twenty-nine of the 36 respondents (81%) would consider using the extended weekday hours for plans review and inspections. However, only 13 (36%) would make regular use of plans processing services during the week and 19 (53%) indicated they would for inspections. Only 10 (28%) would use Saturdays for plans review while 15 (45%) would regularly use Saturdays for inspections. Customers indicated they would not make use of Saturday afternoon services.

Customers indicated they are generally more satisfied with inspection services than with the permitting process and, while they believe extended service hours would increase convenience, many respondents

would prefer increased access to plans examiners. Survey respondents also offered several suggestions for improving building services and increasing customer satisfaction. A list of customer suggestions is included in Appendix B.

#### Employee Survey

The survey of 262 employees included staff from the Building Department, the Department of Planning and Zoning, DERM, and WASD. Forty-two of the 262 employees were administration and support staff not considered for alternate work schedules. Of the remaining 220 employees, 172 (78%) expressed some interest in working a 4x10 schedule. Employees in Administration, Information and Permit Support, and Plumbing indicate a preference for the 4x10 schedule over current work schedules. However, several employees expressed a preference for maintaining their current schedules.

Employees offered 181 comments concerning their preference for a 4x10 work schedule, of which 117 (65%) were related to personal reasons. Many employees indicated they would use the additional weekday off to conduct personal business without using sick or annual leave. However, employees will probably still require additional days off to conduct these activities while working a compressed workweek. Other employees cited a desire to spend more time with their families, to attend classes and to avoid traffic delays. Some employees who were not interested in working a 4x10 schedule also cited the same reasons for disinterest. Others noted loss in effectiveness, lower productivity and employee burnout with compressed schedules.

There was very little personal interest in working a staggered 5x8 schedule. Subsequent staff interviews indicate that staff voted for the 4x10 schedule as opposed to independently assessing each option. Most employees cited family and personal commitments, and preference for arriving home early. However, many of these same employees were very interested in working a 4x10 schedule that would still require them to work late four days each week. This indicates that staff may have chosen the 4x10 schedule largely based on a desire to have the extra day off.

Only 18% of respondents were willing to consider working on Saturdays.

#### Extended Service Hours in Other Jurisdictions

OPI compared service hours in 16 building departments in different jurisdictions (seven Florida counties and nine jurisdictions nationwide). Three jurisdictions; San Diego County, Duval County and Los Angeles County offer extended service hours.

Los Angeles County (population 9,329,989) extends service hours as part of the countywide initiative to decrease peak hour traffic, reduce air pollution and save energy. The effort was not aimed at increasing customer convenience. The main offices, which predominantly support projects in County-



owned facilities, offer plans processing services only and operate from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays. The offices are closed on Fridays. County operated field offices offer no extended service however, one field office managed by a private firm operates on a 4x10 schedule Mondays through Thursdays and is closed on Fridays.

In San Diego County (population 2,820,844), extended hours are offered on Thursdays only. The main office offers full service at the intake counter, as well as access to plans reviewers, but offers no inspection services. Extended hours, facilitated by working staggered 8-hour shifts, began as a pilot project to gauge customer demand. The County reports that even though demand is low, it will continue to offer the services.

Over the past four years Duval County has offered extended service hours as a convenience to homeowners. Plans drop-off and pick-up services are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays until 7:00 p.m. Intake staff work on rotating 8-hour shifts and cashiers work staggered 5x8 shifts. Duval County reports that while they targeted homeowners, professional plan runners are the primary users of the extended service hours.

#### Compressed workweeks in other Miami-Dade County Departments

OPI reviewed how other Miami-Dade County departments employ 4x10 work schedules. The findings are summarized in Table 4 below.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Work Unit/Function</b>	<b>Justification for Compressed Workweek</b>	<b>Staff Participation</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Water And Sewer	Sewer line Installation and Repair Crews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps offset travel time to/from work-site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three crews of 6-7 individuals work a 4x10 schedule Monday through Thursday. All crews take Fridays off</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers work paid overtime on Fridays to complete work left unfinished during the week</li> <li>No job basis staff works 4x10</li> </ul>
Water And Sewer	Accounts Payable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendation resulting from the POWER Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five of 14 staff work a 4x10 schedule and Mondays or Fridays are days taken off</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some staff have dropped out of the program for family reasons and personal preference</li> <li>The program is over one year old</li> </ul>
Solid Waste Management	Garbage Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County established a policy of no garbage collection on Wednesdays. Staff work 4x10 on assigned routes (piece work)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All garbage collection crews take Wednesdays off</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crews completing their daily route in less than 10 hours may go home</li> </ul>
Employee Relations	Payroll Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payroll must be completed by a certain date every pay period and the office must operate extended hours to make this possible. Staff opted to extend hours by working 4x10 schedules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately 12 of 35 staff work a 4x10 schedule</li> <li>All staff take Tuesdays or Wednesdays off (day off rotated every other week)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisors work a 4x10 to ensure coverage</li> <li>Individuals are given other work assignments irrespective of their schedule</li> </ul>

## 6. OPTIONS FOR ALTERNATE WORK SCHEDULES

Several options for working compressed workweeks and for extending service hours to the public were investigated. Aside from the current work schedules, variations of a 5x8 or 4x10 workweek are the most feasible. The following is a brief description of each option and includes alternatives for including four hours of service on Saturdays. The applicability of any schedule or combination of schedules will depend on the job functions, location, customer demand and available staffing. It should be noted that any significant change in work schedules involving staff represented by collective labor agreement requires approval by the participating labor union. Details of the shift alternatives are included in Appendix C.

### A. Four Days per Week and 10 Hours Per Day (4x10) Workweeks

4x10 work schedules typically require staff to be divided into two or more crews working 10-hour days for four days each week with three days off. The most popular shifts require employees to work Mondays through Thursdays or Tuesdays through Fridays in order to operate 5-days per week. On Mondays and Fridays the division will operate with a reduced staff. Alternately, if staffing permits, adding a third crew that takes Wednesdays off, reduces staff shortages on Mondays and Fridays by one-third instead of one-half. Staffing on Wednesdays will also be reduced by one third. This schedule requires no shift rotation unless night and/or weekend work is required.

In order to provide four hours of service on Saturdays without incurring overtime charges, the schedule may be modified as shown in Table 5. The first crew works 10-hour days Mondays-Thursdays while the second works 9-hour days Tuesdays-Fridays and four hours on Saturdays. Crews rotate each week so that each crew works two weekends each month and gets two 4-day and two 1½-day weekends each month. Should the Department decide to discontinue Saturday services, crews can easily revert to the standard 4x10 schedule.

Where staffing permits, a crew working the standard 5-day week can be added to any 4x10 schedule and may be rotated if required. Additionally, staff may scatter days off during the week to reduce the impact of reduced staffing on Mondays and Fridays.

**Table 5**  
4x10 Schedule with Saturday Service

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Crew A		9	9	9	9	4		10	10	10	10			
Crew B	10	10	10	10					9	9	9	9	4	

Compressed workweeks are best suited for piecework, where customer demand allows a compressed schedule and where there is adequate staff to meet demand without degrading customer service quality, causing employee burnout or increasing production carryover.

**B. Staggered 5 days – 8 hours per day (5x8) Workweeks**

Instituting staggered 5x8 workweeks requires departments to divide staff into two or more crews arriving and leaving at different times during the workday. For example, to extend the business day by two hours using a two-crew rotation, the early crew arrives at the normal start of business and the late crew arrives two hours later. Both crews work eight hours per day, 40 hours per week with the option to rotate each week as shown in Table 6 below. Additional crews can be added to the rotation to reduce the length of the stagger and/or to better manage staffing levels throughout the day. A staggered workday allows the Department to provide extended business hours, is easy to administer and only requires a reduced staff for a maximum of two hours during the mornings and after normal business hours. Departments will be able to manage their operations in a manner similar to the present irrespective of whether staff is on vacation or absent for other reasons. The Department could provide Saturday service by requesting staff to work overtime.

Table 6  
Staggered 5x8 Workweek Without Weekend Service

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Crew A	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early			Late	Late	Late	Late	Late		
Crew B	Late	Late	Late	Late	Late			Early	Early	Early	Early	Early		

If usage is low during the extended hours or if departments opt to limit public access during extended business hours, public access may be provided only on selected days while still operating on the 5-day stagger. Under this scenario, on days when no public access is allowed, departments will clear backlogs during this “quiet time”. Alternately, departments may extend business hours only one or two days each week, allowing staff to work staggered 8-hour days only on days when business hours are extended.

Should departments desire to offer Saturday service without incurring overtime, the workweek may be redefined as shown in Table 7. One crew works a standard 5x8 workweek while the second works the modified schedule. Crews would normally rotate such that they each work two Saturdays each month and have 3 of 2½ days off each week. The department will, however, operate with a significantly reduced staff on Mondays unless days off are scattered throughout the week.

Table 7  
Staggered 5-Day Workweek With Weekend Service And Limited Extended Weekday Service

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Crew A		10	8	10	8	4		8	8	8	8	8		
Crew B	8	8	8	8	8				10	8	10	8	4	

**C. Modified 40-Hour Workweek**

Maintaining current work schedules requires staff to work overtime in order to offer Saturday or extended day services. The Department may adopt a modified 40-hour workweek as shown in Table 8

to offer Saturday service without staggering crews or working 4x10 schedules. This requires no change in industry practices and allows divisions to maximize staff during the normal business day. The weekend crew is entitled to an additional day off during the week and crews would be required to rotate each week.

**Table 8**  
Workweek with Weekend Service and no stagger

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
<b>Crew A</b>		9	9	9	9	4		8	8	8	8	8		
<b>Crew B</b>	8	8	8	8	8				9	9	9	9	4	

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Departments are experiencing increased demand for building services as the economy continues to grow, but the Building Department has been unable to fill vacant positions in some divisions or to reduce turnover. At the same time the industry requires permits to be issued and inspections to be completed more quickly.

The Building Department could increase customer convenience by offering extended business hours. However, while the public may make some use of Saturday services, a majority of staff expressed no interest in working on Saturdays, and preferred a 4x10 (Monday through Thursday) schedule. The review of the department's operations, current staffing, customer demand characteristics and production volume provided no evidence that a 4x10 schedule will contribute to an overall improvement in service, increased productivity or reduced costs.

While the limited customer survey indicates the public believes extending business hours will increase their convenience, the major benefit accrues to employees who will earn 3-day weekends by compressing the workweek. This could increase morale provided staff is not frequently required to work on their days off. However, 4x10 schedules reduce the opportunities for overtime outside of employees' scheduled days off, but the Department meets current production totals partly through overtime. Staff may therefore be requested to work on their days off if the Department is to meet demand. Additionally, job basis employees who currently work between 40 and 48 hours per week would effectively work 40 hours per week under a 10 hour regime, resulting in a reduction of as much as 20% in productive hours. These problems are amplified when staff takes vacation, sick or educational leave. A review of daily demand for services indicates that except for a slightly lower demand on Mondays, demand remains constant throughout the week. The Department therefore requires an adequate number of staff to be available every day of the week to meet these demands within the established turnaround times.

Access to construction sites for inspections after 3:30 p.m. requires industry buy-in and cooperation and in many cases may require firms to pay overtime. Additionally, given the experience in other jurisdictions, it is questionable if extended weekday services will significantly benefit homeowners.

Should the Department allow public access to services during extended hours, supporting departments should offer the same access. Departments such as DERM could not offer a full range of services on a

compressed workweek without hiring additional staff. The Department of Health and WASD also indicated that additional staffing and budget revisions are needed to make 4x10 a reality.

Any initiative to compress workweeks (or to extend business hours) requires significant changes in service schedules and back office support systems to match the new operating hours. As a result, departments need to develop new operating policies and reprogram computers.

Compressed workweeks are not feasible at the Downtown offices because of staffing limitations, inadequate supervisory staff support and technical support to ensure the Department can process the volume of permit applications without increasing backlog. Also, the Department must take into account the effect of reduced staff on the level of services provided on Professional Day. Additionally, if the Department offers public access after 5:00 p.m., new security measures and elevator lockout programs would be required to control public access to other floors. Elevator reprogramming would cost in excess of \$40,000 and there will also be a \$145/hour service charge payable to General Services Administration for use of the offices after 5:00 pm and on weekends. Compressed workweeks are not feasible for plans examiners at the West Dade offices largely due to staffing limitations and technical support requirements.

Inspectors and permit clerks at the West Dade offices could more easily staff a 4x10 schedule. Staff would need to scatter their days off throughout the week to reduce the impact on customer service. Staff may also need to report for work on their days off to complete carryover inspections. The main issues inhibiting implementation of a 4x10 schedule include access to construction sites after 3:30 p.m., available daylight hours during fall and winter months, limitations of mainframe computer programs, limited staff available for crew supervision and the anticipated level of carryover when staff is reduced. OPI recommends the Department not implement 4x10 workweeks at this time because of the need to improve the infrastructure and work processes to accommodate 4x10 workweeks. Departments must first resolve all the business issues identified (technical support, software modifications, public access, security and staffing) before instituting any alternate work schedule. We recommend the departments fill existing staff vacancies but we do not recommend increasing staff solely to facilitate 4x10 schedules. OPI also recognizes that the move to new West Dade facilities is planned for 2001 to bring all building services under one roof and to utilize improved technology. Given the number of issues that need to be resolved before working alternate schedules, we recommend the Department resolve these issues in conjunction with the move. A checklist of issues is presented in Appendix D. Once departments are relocated and the effectiveness of the new offices has been evaluated, we recommend reassessing the feasibility of 4x10 workweeks.

Alternate work schedules are not recommended for division chiefs, unit supervisors and senior managers. Additionally, neither the South Dade nor Airport office is recommended for participation in alternate work schedules.

After departments relocate and as an alternative to 4x10 schedules, the Department may increase customer convenience by offering extended hours for permitting services to the general public on weekdays and four hours of inspection services on Saturdays. Inspection services should initially to be targeted to homeowners until access issues are addressed with commercial developers. OPI suggests two six-month pilot programs as follows:

- a. For permitting services, form staggered 5x8 crews offering extended service only two days each week for two extra hours each day. Staff on the late shift should be no more that 20%

of the current staff complement and will provide plans drop-off and pickup, information and cashiering services. Plans examiners at SPCC may participate only if the public requires this service.

- b. In the case of inspections, create a crew consisting of no more than 20% of the current staff in each trade to provide Saturday services. On a rotating schedule the Saturday crew works four 9-hour days each week and four hours on Saturday.

These pilot programs provide flexibility and where extended services are under utilized, the Department may revert to the traditional 5-day schedules. As with a 4x10 schedule, extensive preparation will be needed to resolve many of the same business issues prior to implementation. OPI recommends incorporating plans for these pilot programs into the planned move to the new West Dade facilities. Issues include:

These pilot programs provide flexibility and where extended services are under utilized, the Department may revert to the traditional 5-day schedules. As with a 4x10 schedule, extensive preparation will be needed to resolve many of the same issues raised by a 4x10 schedule prior to implementation. OPI recommends incorporating plans for these pilot programs into the planned move to the new West Dade facilities. Some issues are summarized below. For a detailed list of issues, refer to Appendix D.

- Determine the operating policies and set cut off and carryover cut off times.
- Commission an ITD review of technical services to provide adequate on-site coverage.
- Review and reprogram mainframe and distributed software programs.
- Discuss operating hours with employees. Inspectors may need to begin work at 6:00 a.m. in order to end the day at 3:30 p.m. This may not be attractive to inspectors. Instead a 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. shift may be more attractive, provided the Department can schedule inspections after 3:30 p.m. on a daily basis.
- Establish that there is demand for inspections after 3:30 p.m. and resolve the issues of poor lighting during the fall and winter months.
- Secure union approval as required prior to securing approval from staff.
- Advertise to the public and set Saturday inspection quotas.
- Coordinate with supporting departments to make services available.
- Resolve security issues at SPCC, accept projects over 1000 square feet at West Dade and resolve the staffing dilemma if rollout will occur before the move the West Dade.

**Appendix A**  
**Miami-Dade County**  
**Building Department**  
**Feasibility of 4-day, 10-Hours Per Day (4x10) Workweeks**

**Business Case Issues**

The following outlines the main business issues surrounding the 4x10 proposal. Aside from staff interests in working alternate schedules, departments must also resolve several management, planning, technology and customer service issues. Issues specific to departments supporting building services are:

Customer Service

1. Business hours may be extended without offering public access. The added hours may be used as “quiet time”. Quiet time indicates that staff will concentrate on clearing backlog, performing reviews and other administrative tasks without interruption from the public. However, if there is customer willingness to make use of the additional hours, departments may not be able to justify quiet time. Unlike other workgroups, inspectors have no opportunity for quiet time. Therefore, any extension of inspection hours requires inspectors to complete additional inspections.
2. The limited customer survey indicates that extended weekday and Saturday hours may be desirable. However, if customers incur additional overtime costs (to make construction sites accessible for inspection during extended hours or to submit plans), demand for after-hours services may fall. Before offering extended hours to the public, the Department should verify if demand exists.
3. While customers may find Saturday services convenient, less than 20% of building staff indicate interest in working Saturdays.
4. If staff, public demand for services, technology and equipment permit, extending service hours poses few other problems for inspectors out of the West Dade offices. However, it would not be practical to offer permitting services five days per week on a compressed schedule with the existing staff without adversely affecting the quality of customer care.
5. Customers making use of extended permitting hours will need to commute to the Downtown (SPCC) office as the West Dade offices are not equipped to offer these services.
6. At SPCC, access and security pose additional challenges. These include elevator operations, security and access to other floors, and fire safety. Employing additional security, creating a temporary lobby office for intake staff or finding technological solutions are some of the possible solutions.
7. Compressed workweeks will reduce the staff available to manage peak demands. This may result in longer queues, increased backlog, and the perception of an inefficient office. Any work schedule that reduces the number of staff available in any given day raises the probability that carryover will increase. On a traditional 4x10 schedule the most likely days for high carryover volumes are Mondays and Fridays, since these are the days people would be taking off.

8. Other surveyed jurisdictions indicate that extended service hours were most beneficial to professional plans runners as opposed to the average residential customer.
9. In the case of field inspections, extending the business day two hours creates a 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. inspection day. This may have limited positive effect on the homeowner who will still endure rush hour traffic problems and continue to take time off from work to meet inspectors. Additionally, the building industry normally closes construction sites by 3:30 p.m. weekdays and all weekend. In order to offer inspections after 3:30 p.m. the Department must confirm the industry will make the sites available to inspectors. Alternately, the Department may be able to schedule only residential inspections during extended hours.
10. Beginning inspections before 7:00 a.m. or inspecting after 5:00 p.m. raises lighting issues during Eastern Standard Time (fall and winter) when daylight hours are reduced.
11. Monday is “Professional Day” where trade professionals meet with plans examiners. No alternate day is made available during any week in which Monday is a County holiday. The option of replacing the all-day professional day by dedicating a few hours each weekday to meet with professionals may become unmanageable and will actually reduce the time available for plans review.
12. The customer survey indicates that the industry wants more access to plans reviewers. Therefore any alternate work schedule should not result in the reduction of staff available for Professional Day.

#### Planning And Administration

1. Employees would need to make significant changes to personal schedules in order to work alternate hours. Impacts include childcare arrangements, family and religious time, school arrangements and continuing education.
2. While most employees indicate interest in a 4x10 schedule, the Department should consider multiple work schedules, and/or limit participation to manage carryover, to ensure adequate staff is available for peak customer demand, and to minimize the incidents of staff working on their days off.
3. Compressed workweeks can significantly reduce overtime. Salaries of employees who work a significant amount of paid overtime will be reduced as overtime opportunities are reduced.
4. Other planning problems include the dilemma of scheduling meetings, requiring staff to work on their days off, absenteeism due to burnout, inadequate staff to handle peak demand, and not having key staff present when important decisions need to be made.
5. A review of staffing in permitting indicates that there is insufficient staff in some divisions to operate on a 4x10 work schedule. As an example, due to the volume and timing of peak demand, plans processors would be best suited to work staggered 5x8 shifts as opposed to a 4x10 schedule.
6. Some divisions endeavor to assign the same inspector to a particular project during construction. To



the customer, this provides continuity and reduces delays. Additionally, inspectors are generally assigned the same “inspection zone”. Under a 4x10 work schedule, the practice of assigning the same inspector to a particular project has to be discontinued and inspection zones will become less well defined.

7. Inspectors and plan reviewers in some trades periodically communicate while cases are being processed. If plans reviewers are not available, (for example, if Saturday services are offered for inspections only) there may be some delay in completing some inspections.
8. Any inconsistent application of alternate work hours may adversely impact employee morale.
9. A mix of schedules also raises question concerning accounting for days-off and compensation for County holidays that fall on an employee’s scheduled days off. The department must develop operating policies to address these issues.
10. Staff will be available fewer hours (as many 26 hours less per year) on a 4x10 schedule. Some staff may also be owed additional compensation because of holidays falling on scheduled days off.
11. Access to other floors within the Department is a requirement for Planning and Zoning. When reviewing plans, this department requires files from other floors (11<sup>th</sup> floor file room for plats, 12<sup>th</sup> floor for Agreements and Resolutions, and 14<sup>th</sup> floor for plats roads and right-of-ways). Should Plans review operate on extended hours, Zoning requires access to these floors.
12. Other supporting departments (Water and Sewer and the Fire Department) collect their own fees independent of the building department. Should the Building Department offer extended permitting service hours to the public, then Fire and WASD will have to be available during the same hours to ensure the full range of customer services are available.

#### Technical Support

1. A 4x10 schedule or other extended business hours options require administrative and technical support services to be available during the extended hours. The Building Department pays for three ITD staff (two supplied with Nextel radios) to provide 24 hour-7 days per week on-call support. Therefore additional weekday offsite and Saturday support are already available. However, extended weekday service hours will affect computer systems as follows:
  - a. If the public is allowed to request inspections later than the current 4:00 PM cut off, mainframe programs must be modified to accept the change in cut off times and to accommodate weekend work.
  - b. If inspectors will enter results later than the current 5:30 p.m., the cut off for carryover specification should also be changed to align with the time of the routing job stream.
  - c. Whenever job streams are run late there may be need for on-site technical support to correct errors in batch processing and route creation.
  - d. The inspection results entry program disables the ability to enter inspection results between 8:00

- p.m. and 6:00 a.m. each day to prevent problems that might occur during mainframe batch processing. This process may have to be re-timed.
- e. 4X10 regimes require analysis to determine which inspector (by name and trade) will handle the various zones and portions of zones on each workday. Currently ITD assumes all inspectors work Monday through Friday in a predefined zone. Supervisors have the ability to reassign inspections (online) from one inspector's route to another on a small scale; however, the system is not designed to handle large volume reassignments.
2. Compressed schedules require staff working later than 5:00 p.m. or on weekends to contact their technical support representative if problems occur unless changes are made in the ITD technical support schedules. There may be delays in problem resolution since support personnel are not regularly on site past 5:00 p.m. or on weekends.
  3. To accommodate Saturday service, mainframe programs have to be modified to accept Saturday as a working day. Once the Building Department determines business policies for Saturday services, ITD would need to conduct extensive analysis in order to modify all mainframe programs, jobs and distributed programs that will be affected. Business policies include determination of operating rules governing inspection schedules, inspection work distribution, cut off times for carryover and inspection requests, and weekend volume standards.
  4. Building Department's in-house computer systems and support will also be affected. These include support staff for plans tracking, regulation and code enforcement, elevator and boiler tracking, and 40-year building re-certification. Currently there is no on-call staff after 5:00 p.m. to support these services. Additionally, the Departments' internal computer systems and procedures may have to be reconfigured for weekends and extended weekday service hours.
  5. Since the level of expertise and experience varies among trades, plans processing staff in one trade may have to be cross-trained in other disciplines.
  6. Departments offering extended and or Saturday services will also incur additional costs for building and support services such as lighting, office space and cars.

### **Productivity Considerations**

Any shift to extended service hours without adding staff is not expected to significantly increase productivity. As such the department will need to continue to contract some plans review services. Where staffing or supervisory personnel is inadequate to effectively operate with alternate schedules, no alternate work schedule should be considered until new staff is hired or work volumes are significantly reduced. It must be noted that for some operations, temporary staff may not be appropriate for security purposes and or for technical reasons. Productivity issues include:

1. Despite the attractiveness of three days off per week, fatigue can reduce productivity and increase absenteeism. While fatigue is less of a concern for field inspectors, plans reviewers, plans technicians and intake staff may experience increased fatigue and reduced productivity towards the end of a 10-hour day. This may in turn negatively affect the current plans review turnaround times imposed on each trade.

2. It is expected that on a 4X10 schedule, a division will operate with a typical 30% to 50% staff reduction in available time at least two days per week. This increases when staff takes vacations, sick time or attend training programs. The Department can expect an increase in carryover work and complaints from customers.

### **Benefits And Costs**

A 4x10 schedule may improve public relations and customer convenience. These are the major benefits to the County. Departments must however determine the true costs and benefits in terms of turnaround time, convenience, payroll costs, other expenses, productivity, customer service quality and employee morale. Also, several staffing issues have to be resolved including the level of staffing in the various trades and the ability of the Department to recruit and retain qualified staff and supervisors. Some of the costs and benefits identified during the study are:

1. Extending inspection services to Saturdays may increase ticketing revenues for un-permitted construction. Conversely, this may encourage the public to apply for permits before construction and may result in an increase in the number of permit applications. This may create a need for additional staff to meet plans turnaround deadlines.
2. Extending inspection services hours will significantly reduce overtime revenues. Overtime requests currently represent approximately \$58,500 in revenues annually.
3. Any backlog in inspections and/or staff shortages may require inspectors to work an extra hour or two to complete the daily inspection volume standard. Under a 4x10 schedule, in the absence of working 11 or 12 hours per day, this work will become carryover. As experienced in other departments, staff may be requested to work overtime on their days off.
4. Assuming there is adequate staff, 4x10 schedules can significantly reduce routine overtime costs.
5. On a 4x10 regime, the Department should consider the implications of requesting job basis employees to work more than 40 (possibly as much as 48) hours per week without additional compensation on permanent basis. Currently, job basis employees may work 40 to 48 hours per week (without overtime compensation) to complete assignments. Instituting 4x10 workweeks effectively reduces the actual workweek to 40 hours or a loss of up to 20 %.
6. Unlike the West Dade offices the SPCC offices are not equipped to allow public access after 5:00 p.m. There is no way to control access by floors with the current elevator configurations. General Services Administration (GSA) estimates costs over \$40,000 to reprogram elevators. This does not include keying stairwell doors or erecting additional barriers to improve security. GSA has plans (over the long term) to investigate installing elevator card-access by floor, with communicating links and electronic locks for stairwell access doors. However, in the short term, the Building Department has the option of employing additional security personnel to escort customers to and from the Department's floors, or to adopt a method of elevator lock outs in conjunction with erecting barriers or adding new security guards. A lobby area public access office would be the ideal arrangement

but requires long term planning to provide the space, controlled access and computers linked to the Department's mainframe computer.

7. Every department working after hours is required to pay additional rent ranging from \$45 per hour at the South Dade Government center to \$145 per hour at SPCC. Additionally there may be charges for elevator services at \$50 per hour.
8. Any change in service hours requires the Department to absorb the costs of informing the public of the new service hours, types of services offered and the location.

### **Effect On Other Departments**

1. Departments such as DERM, Fire, Water and Sewer, Planning and Zoning, and the Department of Health all participate in the permits and inspection processes. Where processes are closely related it is prudent for all departments to operate in similar manner to maximize public convenience.
2. A 4x10 schedule will have the least effect on the Fire Department because it already works two 4x10 schedules (using three shifts and starting at 6:30 a.m.) for plans review. However, the extended hours are dedicated to "quiet time" with no public access for fee payments, plans drop off and pick-up or customer consultation. If the Building Department extends service hours allowing public access, all departments should offer the same services during the extended hours.
3. DERM will not be able to offer extended hours because, while production volumes are smaller (80 to 90 plans processed per day), work is normally assigned by category to a few multi-disciplined specialists and engineers. These positions are normally staffed with a single professional.
4. Miami-Dade's Water and Sewer Department collects its own permit fees independent of the Building Department, but provides no extended service hours either for quiet time or for public access.

**Appendix B**  
**Miami-Dade County**  
**Building Department**  
**Feasibility of 4-day, 10-Hours per Day (4x10) Workweeks**

**Surveys**

The Office of Performance Improvement conducted a limited survey of building customers, a survey of building services staff and a survey of other building departments in other jurisdictions. The following are the results of each survey.

**Customer Survey**

The limited survey of Building Department's customers aimed to assess the demand for extended service hours for permit applications, plans review, and inspections, as well as to solicit general comments regarding these processes. Results are based on 36 total responses; three respondents completed page 1 only. The sample is not representative of the Building Department's more than 20,000 active customers.

Survey Results

In general, the survey showed customer demand for extended service hours. Most respondents would at least occasionally utilize extended weekday hours for both plans review and inspections. Respondents would also use Saturday hours, although more customers would regularly use Saturday service hours for inspections (45% of respondents) than for plans processing (28% of respondents). Most respondents prefer Saturday morning hours only and would not use Saturday afternoon service hours.

*Plans processing:*

50% of the respondents submit both commercial and residential plans. 75% of respondents submit both drop-off and walk-through requests. 81% of respondents would use extended weekday service hours. However, only 36% would use them regularly. 67% of the respondents would make use of Saturday hours, but only 28% would do so regularly. Of those who would use Saturday hours, 75% would prefer morning hours. Only 21% would prefer all day hours, and none would prefer only afternoon hours. 69% of respondents believe that extending service hours for plans review, permit applications and fee payments would increase their convenience. 13 of 36 respondents would like more access to plans examiners.

*Inspections:*

Respondents request inspections in a variety of ways. The most common methods are in person at the Building Department and by phone via the voice response system. There is strong demand for extended weekday service hours for inspections among the respondents. 88% would use the extended service hours, and 58% would use them regularly. There is demand for Saturday service hours for inspections as well: 84% of respondents would use Saturday service hours, and 45% would use them regularly. Of those who would use Saturday service hours, 64% would prefer morning hours, while 29% would prefer all day hours. A majority of respondents (85%) believes that extending field inspection service hours would increase their convenience.

In general, respondents seem more satisfied with the inspections process than with the plans review process. Customers made 41 suggestions (Table B1) for improving the plans review process, but just 17 suggestions for improving the inspections process. Seven respondents said that no improvements were needed in the inspections process.

**Table B1**  
**Customer Survey Comments**

Question: What additional improvements would you like to see in the plans review and/or permit application processes?

<i>Comment</i>		<i>No of Responses</i>
<b>Access</b>		
1	Grant more access to plans reviewers.	13
2	Create a way to apply for roofing and simple permits via the Internet.	2
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>15</b>
<b>Efficiency / Department Processes</b>		
1	Review plans faster.	5
2	Provide all comments as part of the initial review, and complete total process within 30 calendar days of initial submission, provided that all comments are promptly and appropriately addressed by the builder.	1
3	Streamline the entire permitting process.	1
4	Provide exclusive drop-off and pick-up service lines for roofing permits as well as same-day roofing processing service.	1
5	Improve communication among the departments that review plans—e.g. Building, DERM, Zoning, Public Works, and Fire.	1
6	Separate Zoning and DERM from the Building Department process.	1
7	Eliminate the attachment of product approval to permit application—it wastes paper and money.	2
8	Make the system more computer-oriented, with less paperwork.	1
9	Hire additional competent personnel.	2
10	Make permit process less complicated.	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>16</b>
<b>Customer Service</b>		
1	Provide better service when customers come in for revisions.	1
2	Processors should start on time and take fewer coffee breaks.	1
3	Departments should develop a better understanding of developer needs.	1
4	Stop giving contractors such a hard time.	1
5	Treat all customers the same—it seems like some people don't have to stand in line.	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>5</b>
<b>Code Interpretation</b>		
1	Invite contractors to seminars that the inspectors and processors attend so they can all learn the same information. Then, contractors wouldn't have to learn about new rules and regulations via rejections.	1
2	Show greater consistency in the interpretation of the code.	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>2</b>
<b>Other</b>		
1	None.	2
2	Go back to 1990 system.	1
3	Omit word "walk-through"; "fast track" is more accurate.	1
5	"Running a third set of plans for a second job copy to run revisions to job without leaving the job without a job copy for inspections."	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>5</b>

Question 13: What general improvements would you like to see in the inspections process?

<i>Comment</i>		<i>No of responses</i>
<b>Efficiency / Department Processes</b>		
1	Give a more accurate estimation of arrival time (within a few hours rather than “sometime today”).	2
2	Inspectors should arrive the day they are scheduled for; there should be fewer rollovers.	1
3	Post inspections results in computer more promptly.	1
4	Hire more inspectors.	1
5	Decrease the number of requirements for making minor plans revisions.	1
6	Avoid unnecessary delays.	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>7</b>
<b>Customer Service</b>		
1	Provide better service in general.	1
2	The Department should show more flexibility and cooperation.	1
3	Stop giving everyone such a hard time.	1
4	Work more with the homeowner and contractor.	1
5	Fire anyone who says: “You’re a contractor, you should know how to do it.”	1
6	Open on time, not 15 minutes late. Close on time, not 5 minutes early.	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>6</b>
<b>Code Interpretation</b>		
1	Show greater consistency in inspectors’ determination of what is required by the Code.	3
2	Fully explain what we do wrong and how to correct it.	1
<i>Total responses</i>		<b>4</b>
<b>Other</b>		
1	None.	<b>7</b>

## Employee Survey

The survey of 262 employees<sup>1</sup> included the Building Department, the Department of Planning and Zoning (P/Z), the Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM), and the Water and Sewer Department (WASD). The goal of the survey was to assess employee interest in and willingness to work alternate shifts, including Saturdays, in order to accommodate extended business hours.

### Summary

The employee survey revealed that there is strong interest in working a 4x10 schedule: 70% of respondents were interested in working such a shift. In all divisions except for Electrical, a majority of employees are at least slightly interested in a 4x10 schedule. However, employees would prefer to work a 4x10 schedule, as opposed to their current schedules, in only three Building Department divisions (as well as the three non-Building departments): Administration, Information and Permit Support, and Plumbing.

Most employees interested in a 4x10 schedule gave personal reasons for their preference: of 181 employee comments, 117 (or 65%) referred to issues of access to the job site, education, family or

<sup>1</sup> Note: OPI assumes that certain Building Department employees will continue to work a standard 5x8 workweek, regardless of any extended business hours. These employees include division directors, section supervisors, and administrative support personnel; including secretaries, accountants and computer support. The responses of these employees were not included in the tabulations. However, their comments were included in Table 4: Employee Survey Comments.

personal preference. Many employees would like to have a weekday off in order to conduct personal business, make doctor appointments, etc., without using sick or annual leave; to spend more time with their families; to take classes; and to avoid traffic delays. Several employees also noted that working a 4x10 schedule would provide better service to customers, and some felt that employees would be able to work more efficiently given longer workdays.

Employees in all divisions ranked a Monday-Thursday schedule as the most desirable, followed by a Tuesday-Friday schedule. A Monday-Friday schedule, with Wednesdays off, was ranked as least desirable.

Of the employees who are not interested in working a 4x10 schedule, many cited family and other personal commitments (such as taking classes). Some noted that since many construction jobs shut down at 3:30 p.m., the extra hours would be wasted. Others were concerned about efficiency, productivity, and employee burnout with 10-hour days.

There is very little personal interest in working a staggered 5x8 schedule in any of the department's divisions: only 12% of total respondents expressed interest. Most employees cited family and personal commitments in the evenings. However, some employees who said they would not be able to work the late shift as part of a staggered 5x8 schedule were interested in working a 4x10 schedule.

Very few department employees (18% of total respondents) are willing to work Saturdays. A large number said that they preferred to spend Saturdays with their families, and many cited child care concerns as well. Of those employees willing to work on Saturdays, several thought that Saturday hours would better serve the public and the County. Generally, inspectors are more willing than office staff (including plans reviewers, intake staff, and clerks) to work on Saturdays, but this varies significantly by division.

In general, the Plumbing Division seems to be the most interested in working extended hours: 19 out of 21 Division employees are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, and nine are willing to work Saturdays. There is also interest in a 4x10 schedule in the Administration (27 of 33 employees interested), Building (35 of 54), and Permit Support (16 of 22) Divisions, although with less willingness to work Saturdays. Interest in working a 4x10 schedule is more limited in the Electrical (14 of 30 employees interested) and Mechanical (13 of 24) Divisions.

### Summary by Division

*Administration*<sup>2</sup>: Twenty-seven of 33 Division employees (or 82%) are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, and 17 are very interested. Only seven Division employees (or 21%) are interested in a staggered 5x8 schedule; of those employees, six prefer to work the early shift. Only two Division employees are willing to work Saturdays. Employees prefer working a 4x10 schedule to their current schedule by a small margin.

*Building*: Thirty-five of 54 Division employees (or 65%) are interested in working a 4x10 schedule. However, Division employees prefer keeping their current schedule over changing to a 4x10 schedule. Of the employees interested in working a 4x10 schedule, 22 are very interested. Only three Building

<sup>2</sup> Within the Administration Division, only plans processing technicians and intake staff would work extended/alternate hours. 19 of the 33 respondents from the Administration Division are either technicians or intake staff.



employees are interested in a staggered 5x8 schedule. Thirteen (or 24%) are willing to work Saturdays.

*Electrical:* Less than half (14 of 30, or 46%) of Division employees are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, and employees strongly prefer keeping their present schedule. However, of those who are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, eight are very interested. None of the Electrical employees is interested in working a staggered 5x8 schedule. Only two are willing to work Saturdays.

*Mechanical:* Slightly more than half (13 of 24, or 54%) of Division employees are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, and employees equally prefer keeping their current schedule or changing to a 4x10 schedule. Of those interested in a 4x10, 8 are very interested. Four Division employees (or 17%) are interested in a staggered 5x8 schedule. Four are also willing to work Saturdays.

*Information and Permit Support:* Sixteen of 22 Division employees (or 73%) are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, and employees prefer switching to a 4x10 schedule to keeping the current schedule. Of those interested in a 4x10 schedule, 12 are very interested. Four employees (or 18%) are interested in a staggered 5x8 schedule. Four are also willing to work Saturdays.

*Plumbing:* Twenty of 22 Division employees (or 90%) are interested in working a 4x10 schedule. Of these employees, ten are very interested and eight are moderately interested. Only two Division employees are interested in a staggered 5x8 schedule. However, nine are willing to work Saturdays, including four of five office staff and five of sixteen inspectors.

#### Other Departments:

*Planning and Zoning:* Twelve of 14 Planning and Zoning employees (or 86%) are interested in working a 4x10 schedule. Of these employees, nine are very interested. Only three employees are interested in working a staggered 5x8 schedule, and none are very interested. Of those interested, all prefer the early shift. Just two Planning and Zoning employees are willing to work Saturdays.

*DERM:* Fourteen of 19 DERM employees (or 74%) are interested in working a 4x10 schedule, and 12 are very interested. Only two employees are interested in working a staggered 5x8 schedule. Four are willing to work Saturdays.

*WASD:* All three WASD employees are very interested in working a 4x10 schedule. Two are also interested in working a staggered 5x8 schedule. None are willing to work Saturdays.

### Extended Service Hours in Other Jurisdictions

OPI examined the building department service hours of seven Florida counties (including Miami-Dade) and nine other jurisdictions nationwide, (Table B2). Of the sixteen jurisdictions, three offer some kind of extended service hours for plans processing, but only two offer extended service hours to the general public. The San Diego County Building Department offers three hours of extended service on Thursdays, and Duval County, Florida, offers two extra hours on both Tuesdays and Thursdays. None of the jurisdictions surveyed offers Saturday service hours or extended service hours for inspections.

**Table B2**  
**Extended Service Hours in Other Jurisdictions**

Jurisdiction	Annual Permits Issued	Annual Inspections Performed	Business Hours	Extended Hours—Services Offered	Staffing	Comments
1 Los Angeles County, CA Population 9,329,989 Department of Public Works Building and Safety (626) 458-3173	64,300		Multiple servicing sites. The Main Office is open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday; closed Fridays. Field offices are open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. One office managed by a private firm, contracted by the County, works 4x10s Monday - Thursday; closed Fridays.	The Main Office is primarily reserved for projects on County-owned facilities and offers plans review only; no inspections.	Staff work staggered 10-hour days, arriving in 15-minute intervals. Includes plans reviewers, intake staff, and department administration. Staff is governed by collective bargaining agreements.	Extended hours were originally offered as part of a countywide initiative to decrease traffic at peak hours, reduce air pollution, and save energy, not to increase customer convenience at the Building Department.
2 New York City, NY Population 7,420,166 Department of Buildings (212) 312-8000	54,000	Professional compliance program, 15% city checked	Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.			
3 Harris County, TX Population 3,250,404 Harris County Permits (713) 956-3025	16,825	2,742	Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.			
4 Maricopa County, AZ Planning and Development (602) 506-3301			Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.			

Jurisdiction		Annual Permits Issued	Annual Inspections Performed	Business Hours	Extended Hours— Services Offered	Staffing	Comments
5	San Diego County, CA Population 2,820,844 Planning & Land Use (Building Division) (619) 694-2962			Monday - Wednesday & Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Thursday, 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.	The Main Office offers full service at the intake counter, as well as access to a plans reviewer. No inspections.	Staff works a staggered 8-hour shift, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Includes intake staff, 1 plans reviewer, and 1 supervisor. Most staff rotates; one new hire has a permanent Thursday 10-7 shift. Staff is governed by a collective bargaining agreement.	Extended Thursday service was begun as a pilot project to test the demand for extended hours. Volume is very low during extended hours; about 70% of walk-in customers are homeowners. After the six-month pilot, the Department decided to keep extended Thursday hours as a service to the public, despite the low volume. The Department did experience some problems in the beginning with employees switching shifts and not doing their rotations.
6	Orange County, CA Population 2,760,948 Development Processing Center Planning and Development Services (714) 834-2626			Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.			
7	<b>Miami-Dade County, FL</b> <b>Population 2,175,634</b> <b>Building Department</b> <b>(305) 375-2500</b>	<b>98,104</b>	<b>430,938</b>	<b>Reviews: Monday –Friday,</b> <b>7 a.m. - 5 p.m.</b> <b>Inspections: Monday - Friday,</b> <b>7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.</b>			
8	Dallas County, TX Population 2,062,100 One-Stop Permit Center (214) 948-4480			Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.			
9	Broward County, FL Population 1,535,468 Building Code Services Division Dept. of Safety & Emergency Services. (954) 765-5041	37,000	200,000	Reviews: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Inspections: Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.			

Jurisdiction	Annual Permits Issued	Annual Inspections Performed	Business Hours	Extended Hours— Services Offered	Staffing	Comments
10 Riverside County, CA Population 1,530,653 Department of Building and Safety (909) 955-1800			Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.			
11 Duval County / Jacksonville, FL Population 738,483 Building Inspection Division Department of Public Works (904) 630-1100		177,495	Reviews: Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tuesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. - 7 p.m. Inspections: Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Plans drop-off and pick-up for all divisions. Additionally, homeowners can get permits for which plans review is not required.	Staggered 5x8: cashiers and intake staff rotate a 10-7 shift. No overtime.	Extended hours were originally offered as a convenience to homeowners. However, the majority of users are professional plans runners.
12 City of Las Vegas, NV Population 404,288 (Clark Co. 1,217,155) Department of Building & Safety (702) 229-6251	15,809	283,505	Monday –Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.			

**Note:** The following Florida jurisdictions were also contacted: Palm Beach, Pinellas, Orange, and Hillsborough Counties. However, none offered extended service hours.

**Appendix C**  
**Miami-Dade County**  
**Building Department**  
**Feasibility of 4-day, 10-hour Day Work (4x10) Workweeks**

**Shift Options for Extended Business Hours**

**I. SHIFT OPTIONS**

Aside from the current work schedules, variations of a 5x8 or 4x10 workweek are the most feasible. The following is a brief description of each option and includes options for four hours service on Saturdays. The applicability of any schedule or combination of schedules will depend on the job functions, location, customer demand and available staffing.

**A. Four Days per Week and 10 Hours Per Day (4x10) Workweeks**

4x10 work schedules typically require staff to be divided into two or more crews working 10-hour days for four days each week with three days off. The most popular shifts require employees to work Mondays through Thursdays or Tuesdays through Fridays in order to operate five a 5-day per week business. On Mondays and Fridays the division will operate with a reduced staff. Alternately, if staffing permits, adding a third crew that takes Wednesdays off, reduces staff shortage on Mondays and Fridays by one-third instead of one-half. Staffing on Wednesdays will also be reduced by one third. This schedule requires no shift rotation unless night and/or weekend work is required.

In order to provide four hours service on Saturdays without incurring overtime charges the schedule may be modified as shown in Table 1. The first crew works 9 hours Tuesdays-Fridays and four hours on Saturdays while the second works 10-hour days Mondays-Thursday. Crews rotate each week such that each crew works two weekends each month and has four 2½ days off each week. Should the Department decide to discontinue Saturday services, crews can easily revert to the standard 4x10 schedule.

Where staffing permits, a crew working the standard 5-day week can be added to any 4x10 schedule and may be rotated if required. Additionally staff may scatter days off during the week to reduce the impact of reduced staffing on Mondays and Fridays.

**Table 1**  
4x10 Schedule with Saturday Service

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
<b>Crew A</b>		9	9	9	9	4		10	10	10	10			
<b>Crew B</b>	10	10	10	10					9	9	9	9	4	

Compressed workweeks are best suited for piecework, where customer demand allows a compressed schedule and where there is adequate staff to meet demand without degrading customer service quality, causing employee burnout or increasing production carryover.

### B. Staggered 5 days – 8 hours per day (5x8) Workweeks

Instituting staggered 5x8 workweeks require departments to divide staff into two or more crews arriving and leaving at different times during the workday. For example, to extend the business day by two hours using a two-crew rotation, the early crew arrives at the normal start of business and the late crew arrives two hours later. Both crews work eight hours per day, 40 hours per week with the option to rotate each week as shown in Table 2 below. Additional crews can be added to the rotation to reduce the length of stagger and/or to better manage staffing levels throughout the day. A staggered workday allows the Department to provide extended business hours, is easy to administer and only requires a reduced staff for a maximum of two hours during the mornings and after normal business hours. Departments will be able to manage their operations in a similar manner to the present irrespective of whether staff are on vacation or absent for other reasons. The Department could provide Saturday service hours by requesting staff to work overtime.

**Table 2**  
Staggered 5X8 Workweek Without Weekend Service

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
<b>Crew A</b>	Early	Early	Early	Early	Early			Late	Late	Late	Late	Late		
<b>Crew B</b>	Late	Late	Late	Late	Late			Early	Early	Early	Early	Early		

If usage is low during the extended hours or if public access during extended business hours will be limited, departments may offer public access only on selected days while still operating on the 5-day stagger. Under this scenario, on days when no public access is allowed, departments will complete back office backlogs during this “quiet time”. Alternately, departments may extend business hours only one or two days each week allowing staff to work staggered 8-hour days only on days when business hours are extended.

Should departments desire to offer Saturday service hours without incurring overtime, the workweek may be redefined as shown in Tables 3. One crew works a standard 5x8 workweek while the second works the modified schedule. Crews would normally rotate such that they each work two Saturdays each month and get 3 or 1½ days off each week. The Department will however, operate with reduced staff on Mondays unless staff scatters their days off during the week.

**Table 3**  
Staggered 5-Day Workweek With Weekend Service And Limited Extended Weekday Service

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
<b>Crew A</b>		10	8	10	8	4		8	8	8	8	8		
<b>Crew B</b>	8	8	8	8	8				10	8	10	8	4	

### C. Current Operation Incorporating Saturday Service Hours

Maintaining current work schedules requires staff to work overtime in order to offer Saturday or extended day services. This requires very little change in industry practices and allows divisions to maximize staff during the normal business day. Table 4 presents an alternative best suited for offering Saturday without staggering crews or working 4x10 schedules. The weekend crew is entitled to an additional day off during the week and crews would be required to rotate each week.

**Table 4**  
Workweek with Weekend Service and no stagger

Shift	Week 1							Week 2						
	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Crew A		9	9	9	9	4		8	8	8	8	8		
Crew B	8	8	8	8	8				9	9	9	9	4	

## II. SHIFT OPTIONS BY PRIMARY WORK GROUP – GENERAL DISCUSSION

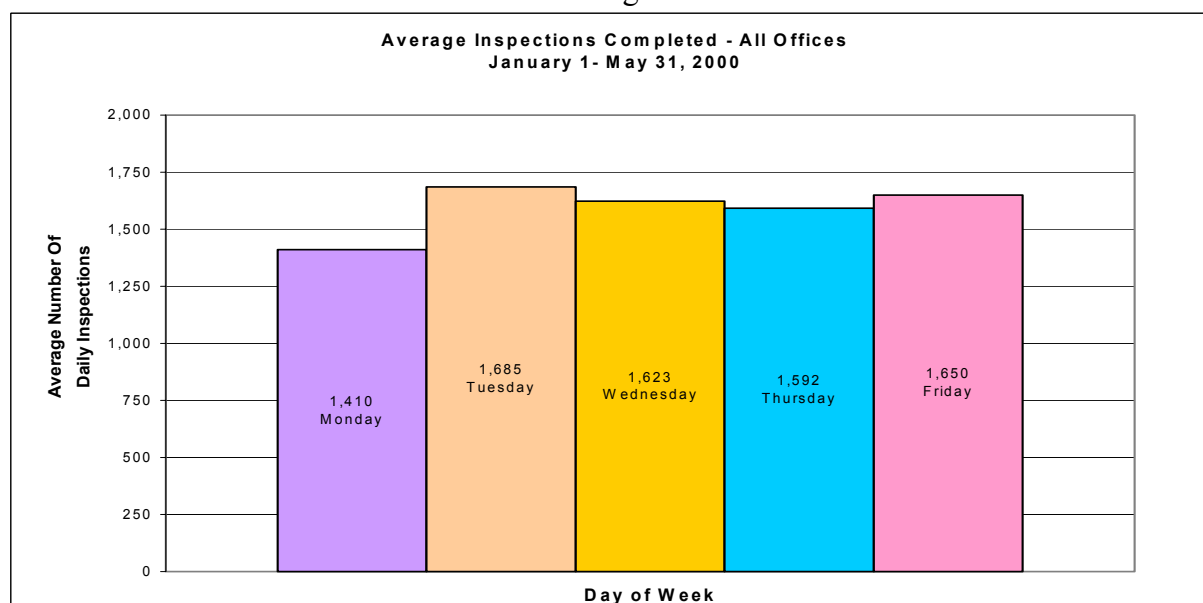
The following is a general analysis of how each major work group of the Building Department would be affected by various schedules. It considers how work groups are staffed and how the flow and volume of work limits the types of schedules that can be used. Finally, it lists obstacles to making particular work schedules operate effectively.

### Inspectors

Inspectors have some flexibility in the type of schedule they can work. Inspectors should theoretically be able to work a 4x10 schedule because they work fairly independently of other Building Department employees. Additionally, any inspector within a single trade can effectively handle any inspection assignment.

Adequate supervision must be available each day for a 4x10 schedule to operate efficiently. Additionally, crews must recognize that carryover inspections not completed on Thursdays may interfere with regularly scheduled inspections ordered for Fridays and possibly Mondays (when staff levels will be significantly reduced). Figure 1 below indicates there is little variation in the average daily inspections completed Monday through Friday.

Figure 1



Consequently, a significantly reduced staff cannot handle the current workload without delays and increasing backlog. Although the inspections scheduling software could be adjusted to address this problem, customers would become upset if requested inspections could not be performed the same day the request was made or at least the following day. Furthermore, increased traffic and reduced daylight hours (during Eastern Standard Time) are two major problems inspectors would face if inspections were conducted after 3:30 p.m.

To facilitate Saturday inspections, a staggered 5x8 schedule could be used with one shift working four 9-hour days during the week and four hours on Saturday on a rotating schedule. The additional hour during the week could be used for meeting customers in the morning and reviewing the day's route. The remaining staff would continue to work a standard 5x8 schedule.

#### Plan Examiners (Plans Processors)

While it is technically feasible to implement a 4x10 schedule for Plan Processors, certain drawbacks outweigh potential gains. First, if a large portion of the staff were regularly out on Mondays, the level and quality of service provided on Professional Day (currently held on Monday) would deteriorate. Moving Professional Day to a fully staffed day (*i.e.* Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays) would reduce the number of fully staffed days (from four to three) for plans review. In addition, since Plans Processors are “Job Basis” employees, they would probably work fewer total hours if they were only required to report to work four days per week. Finally, reviewing plans is very detailed and exacting work. Processors working ten hours a day could suffer from fatigue/burnout, which could reduce job performance and possibly increase absenteeism.

The goal of improving customer service might be better served if the Plan Processors continued to work a standard 5x8 schedule or, alternatively, a staggered 5x8 schedule. If a staggered 5x8 schedule is used, the Building Department should consider further limiting public access to plans examiners during the extended hours. Extended hours would then be used as “quiet time”.

#### Plan Processing Technicians at Stephen P. Clark Center (SPCC)

The work schedule for plan processing technicians should be based on the needs of plans examiners. However, if plans examiners work a 4x10 schedule, Plan Processing Technicians may work a staggered 5x8 schedule or a 4x10 schedule and still provide support to plans examiners. However, current workload dictates that a 4x10 schedule in which a large portion of the staff is out at least two days a week, would adversely affect their ability to move plans expeditiously from the intake counter and between trades.

In addition, since mornings are generally very busy, they require the entire staff to report to work before 9:00 a.m. to handle the volume. If a staggered schedule is implemented, the Building Department will need to increase plans processing staff technicians to effectively manage the workload at peak times.

#### Intake Staff (Front Counter Personnel) at SPCC

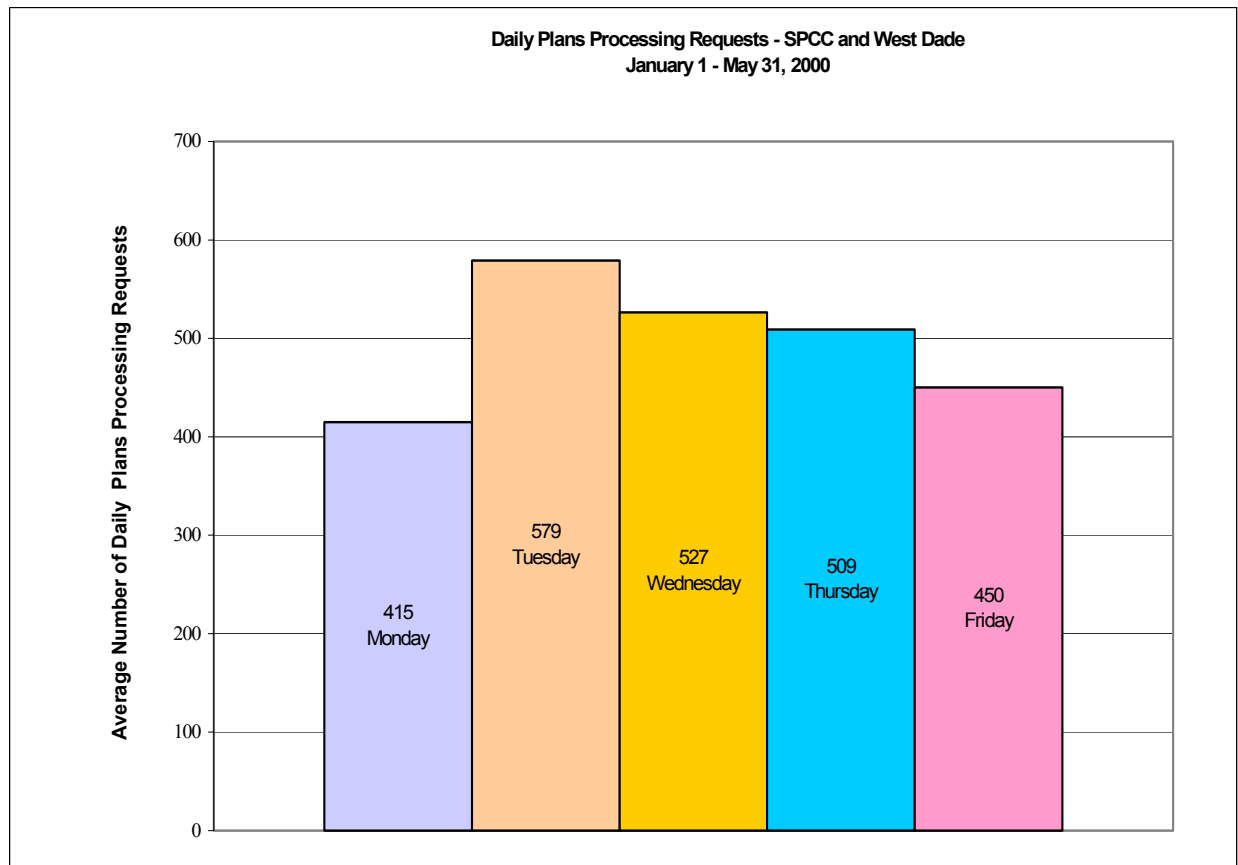
Assuming that security issues at SPCC are resolved, the Front Counter Personnel at SPCC could work a 4x10 or a staggered 5x8 schedule. Workflow graphs (Figure 2) indicate that the average number of permit requests made at both SPCC and West Dade on Mondays and Fridays, for example, is 20%-30% less than on other days of the week. However, the peak time for permit requests occur at mid-morning



and after noon each day. Therefore, implementing a 4x10 schedule would result in longer lines on the days that part of the staff is out if demand remains the same.

When after hours permit requests are low, the Front Counter Personnel may complete paperwork and other administrative duties. This could clear up any backlogs, facilitate processing batch work and prepare the counter for the next business day.

Figure 2



### **Intake Staff - SPCC Cashiers**

Cashiers at SPCC face most of the same issues encountered by the Front Counter Personnel. A 4x10 schedule would probably result in longer lines and exacerbate customer frustrations on the days when some of the Cashiers are out. If Cashiers do work extended hours, and the public is not granted access, Cashiers have batch work that could be done. Clearing up backlogs after hours would free up Cashiers when the counter is open and customers are in line.

### **Intake Staff and Plans Processing Technicians -West Dade**

Since the West Dade Office does not have the same security issues as SPCC, it is possible to implement a work schedule to provide extended service hours to the public. The single work group (Building Permit Clerks) that performs these functions at the West Dade Office could work a staggered 5x8 schedule to accept plans and issue permits in the early evening. A 4x10 schedule would be problematic

since customers would face longer counter and cashier lines on days with reduced staff.

### **III. STAFF AND SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS BY TRADE**

This section reviews individual trades and their work groups to determine if staff is adequate. The analysis assumes that few workflow problems exist.

#### **Electrical Division**

Authorized Positions		Total Vacancies
Current Employees	36	3
Plan Processors at SPCC	5	1
Field Unit Supervisors	4	0
Inspectors	18	2
Sign Inspectors	2	0
*Staff Excluded	7	0
*Senior Supervisors, direct administrative support, and small work groups not located at SPCC were not included in the analysis. These individuals are assumed to continue working a standard 5x8 schedule.		

#### **General Staff Considerations**

There are four general work groups in the Electrical Division: Plan Processors at SPCC, Field Unit Supervisors, Inspectors, and Sign Inspectors. With five Electrical Plan Processors stationed at SPCC, the Electrical Division would have only two individuals reporting to work one day per week on any one of the 4x10 schedules. Until the Plan Processor positions are fully staffed, the division would have problems on days when some of the Plan Processors are taking their regular day off. A staggered 5x8 schedule would address some of these concerns since Plan Processors would be required to work every day.

Taken together, there are enough Inspectors and Field Unit Supervisors to work a 4x10 schedule. No fewer than two Field Unit Supervisors would have to report to work every day. However, a group of Inspectors must take the same day off as some of the Field Unit Supervisors so that the ratio of Inspector to Field Unit Supervisor remains manageable.

The two Sign Inspectors would be required to coordinate their schedules if they worked any one of the alternative work schedules. In a 4x10 schedule, however, only one Sign Inspector would be required to work on certain days and schedules will have to be adjusted when one inspector is sick or goes on vacation.

**Mechanical/Elevator Division**

Authorized Positions		Total Vacancies
Current Employees	33	5
Mechanical Processors at SPCC	6	2
Elevator Inspectors	8	1
Field Unit Supervisors	2	0
Mechanical Inspectors	11	2
*Staff Excluded	6	0
*Senior Supervisors, direct administrative support, and small work groups not located at SPCC were not included in the analysis. These individuals are assumed to continue working a standard 5x8 schedule.		

**General Mechanical/Elevator Division Staff Considerations**

There are four primary work groups in the Mechanical/Elevator Division: Plan Processors at SPCC, Field Unit Supervisors, Elevator Inspectors, and Mechanical Inspectors. Although six Plan Processor positions are authorized for work at SPCC, only four are filled. Until vacant positions are filled, a 4x10 schedule would create some difficulty for the Division to process plans within its legal time limits.

Elevator Inspectors have substantial flexibility to work any one of the alternative schedules. A large proportion of the elevator inspections cover annual certifications, and can be planned ahead of time. In addition, Elevator Inspectors generally have access to a building's elevator room after normal working hours. A 4x10 schedule with adequate supervision would be easy to maintain.

With only two Mechanical Field Unit Supervisors on staff, implementing 4x10 is feasible only for a two-crew rotation. However, if one supervisor goes on vacation, a junior staff or the unit supervisor will need to substitute. Mechanical Inspectors should be able to work an alternative schedule, including a 4x10 workweek. However, the Division should fill current vacancies to provide efficient and timely inspection services.

**Plumbing Division**

Authorized Positions		Vacancies
Current Employees	26	2
Plan Processors (SPCC)	3	0
Field Unit Supervisors	3	0
Inspectors	14	2
Staff Excluded*	6	0
*Senior Supervisors, direct administrative support, and small work groups not located at SPCC were not included in the analysis. These individuals are assumed to continue working a standard 5x8 schedule.		

### **General Plumbing Staff Considerations**

The Plumbing Division has three primary work groups: Plan Processors stationed at SPCC, Field Unit Supervisors, and Inspectors. Plumbing Plan Processors would have difficulty working a 4x10 schedule, since there are only three on staff at SPCC resulting in one plans processor on duty at least twice per week.

The problem of staff shortages on Mondays or Fridays exists for the inspection Field Unit Supervisors as well. However, it could be mitigated if the Unit Supervisor at West Dade were able to provide additional supervision for the Inspectors when one of the three Field Unit Supervisors is not working. Finally, given the number of Inspectors, Plumbing Inspectors face few staff obstacles to working any alternative work schedule.

### **Building/Structural Division**

Authorized Positions		Total Vacancies
Total Employees	93	13
Building Plan Processors at SPCC	8	0
Structural Plan Processors at SPCC	8	3
Building Field Unit Supervisors	6	1
Building Inspectors	42	6
Roofing Field Unit Supervisors	3	0
Roofing Inspectors	12	2
*Staff Excluded	14	1
*Senior Supervisors, direct administrative support, and small work groups not located at SPCC were not included in the analysis. These individuals are assumed to continue working a standard 5x8 schedule.		

### **General Building/Structural Staff Considerations**

The Building/Structural Division is composed of six basic work groups: Building Plan Processors at SPCC, Structural Plan Processors at SPCC, Building Field Unit Supervisors, Roofing Field Unit Supervisors, Building Inspectors, and Roofing Inspectors. The Building Plan Processors at SPCC are fully staffed (eight positions) and could staff a 4x10 schedule. Structural Plan Processors, however, face chronic staff shortages. Although there are eight authorized positions, only five are staffed.

The Building Field Unit Supervisors are fully staffed and may be able to work an alternative work schedule. The Roofing Section Supervisor must however, provide supervisory assistance when only one of the three Roofing Field Unit Supervisors is at work.

Depending on workflow, Building and Roofing Inspectors could work any one of the alternative work schedules, including a 4x10 schedule. Filling the existing vacancies may ease any workflow problems that occur on days when part of the staff is scheduled to take the day off.

### **Intake Staff and Cashiers at SPCC**

The decision to implement an alternative work schedule depends on whether the Building Department decides to offer access during extended hours. If so, the Front Counter personnel may be able to work

any one of the staggered 5x8 schedules. Working a 4x10 schedule may cause significant staff shortages when staff take days off. In particular, lines will be longer on days when part of the staff is out. In order to accommodate the usual heavy morning workload, crew sizes will need to be limited to ensure adequate staff is available to meet peak demands. Supervisors will also need to fill in for staff on some shifts.

	<b>Authorized Number of Front Counter Personnel</b>	<b>Authorized Number of Cashiers</b>	<b>Authorized Number of Plan Processing Technicians</b>
<b>SPCC</b>	11 Building Permit Clerks 1 Supervisor 1 Secretary	4 Permit Clerks (1 is a lead worker) 1 Supervisor	13 Plan Processing Technicians 1 Supervisor
<b>WD</b>	There are 16 clerks assigned to WD that perform the functions of cashier, front counter, plans technician, and telephone operation. One of these individuals is the lead worker. There is one supervisor in addition to this crew of 16.		

### **Plan Processing Technicians at SPCC**

The schedule for Plan Processing Technicians should be based on the needs of Plans Examiners. If examiners work extended hours, then a sufficient number of technicians need to be available to barcode and move plans between trades after 5:00 p.m. Given the limited number of technicians and the need for a full staff during the morning rush, a 4x10 schedule would not be ideal. Plans processors are best suited to a staggered 5x8 schedule.

### **West Dade Office**

Since the 16 Building Permit Clerks at the West Dade office are capable of working the intake counter, the cashiering counter or as plan processing technicians, a 4x10 or 5x8 schedule is feasible.

**Appendix D**  
**Miami-Dade County**  
**Building Department**

**Considerations for Instituting Flex Time and Compressed Workweeks**

As congestion grows in major cities it directly affects pollution, commuting time and occupancy costs of buildings. An increasing number of employees are seeking solutions such as flextime, staggered workdays and compressed workweeks to overcome these challenges. Alternate work schedules may increase productivity as both the employer and employees can focus resources to the most productive times. Alternate work schedules can also be helpful as demand shifts or there is a slow down in volume, and to control overtime expenditures. In determining policies on alternate work schedules, departments should consider the following:

- Establish business goals for instituting alternate workweeks. These may include increased productivity and customer services, employee morale and cost reductions.
- Determine if current labor agreements and applicable labor and overtime laws will affect alternate work arrangements. Other laws to consider include the Family Medical Leave Act 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Determine the types and the extent of the alternate workweek including staggered, flextime and compressed workweek. Also determine if business will be conducted four, five, six or seven days per week based on demand and customer service needs.
- Establish the level of employee participation and eligibility, and determine if schedules will be rotated. Will all staff participate and will such participation be voluntary? Also establish a mechanism for staff to change their schedules (or have their schedules changed) within the parameters of the business requirements.
- To ensure compliance with wage, overtime, leave and scheduling requirements, maintain written records of employee's shift selection and hours of work.

As departments consider the above change in operating policy, directors must also consider the following:

- Determine how the work schedule policy will be coordinated with other policies and directives.
- Ensure that the policy does not discriminate and/or result in decreased morale.
- Determine how (if any) the policy affects layoffs, bumping rights or an employee's ability to work part time or reduced hours.
- Establish how work schedules will be maintained during training and re-certification as these schedules may conflict with the normal work schedules.

Other department specific issues to resolve are:

- Determine the work activities or services to be extended past the normal 5:00 p.m. close of business.
- Determine customer demand for and/or willingness to use the services.
- Determine if the public will be allowed access, and if so, establish when these services will be offered.
- Determine the impact on process costs, overtime, employee morale, customer service, building operating costs, equipment needs, productivity, carryover and customer convenience.
- Review and modify safety and security procedures to protect data, customers and employees during extended business hours.
- Establish new business policies concerning job scheduling, workdays, work assignment, overtime and carryover and the need to work on scheduled days off.
- Request technology cost estimates to modify software and to adequately support the change.
- Assess staffing requirements and supervision.
- Seek union approval for substantial changes in work schedule. Note also that some schedules will result in reduced employee pay because of partial elimination of overtime opportunities.
- Complete applicable software changes.
- Set implementation dates with adequate lead time to advertise operational changes to customers.